THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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ASLEEP.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GLEN CAROL.

The walnut trees still sift their gold
Upon the faded grass below—
The broad, blue river, as of old,
Rolls on with ceaseless ebb and flow.

And still the wind with sobbing cry,
Sweeps round the silent house, and calls
For her upon whose quiet head
Nor storm nor sunshine ever falls.

Warble of birds, and hum of bees—
The pleasant sounds she loved to hear—
She heeds no more, but takes her rest
In solitude from year to year.

And moons have waxed, and sunsets paled,
And still with folded hands she sleeps—
Alike the glow and gloom of earth
To her who never smiles or weeps.

Ah! bending low beside thy grave,
Let me but learn the mystic spell
That wraps thee from my life and love!
I, too, would sleep thus long and well!

RAVENSWOOD;

OR,

The Raftsmen Of The Delaware.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY BURR THORNBURY.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE FOREST AGAIN.

Conducted by their lovely guide, the three men reached the bar-room in which Philip and Frank had passed an uncomfortable hour. All was silent there. A dull sign of fire yet gleamed through the ashes at the wide chimney base, but the temperature of the place was greatly lowered, the chill of outdoors was creeping in.

Not a word had yet been spoken by the girl.

"You must leave this roof," at length she said.

Her voice was melody. She undid the fastenings of the door.

"To remain would be death. *He* has gone to bring helpers in the work of murder." A trembling horror shook her slight frame; pity shone in her eyes.

The young men gazed in admiration upon her, yet at the same time were shocked at the import of her words, and to know that one so pure and beautiful as she, should be in the society of lawless and criminal men.

They pointed significantly to the weapons in their belts.

"We can defend ourselves," said Philip.

"No," she answered. "You are too few. Go while there is time. Better the wintry forest than such shelter as this."

"But you—you may suffer for having thus aided us."

A look of terror passed over her features. She shuddered as if in apprehension of evil.

"We will not desert you," cried Philip, passionately, in whose heart love for the fair young creature who had perhaps imperilled her life for their sakes, was springing.

"You must go," she said with a pleading imperativeness. "Hasten or there will be a conflict—bloodshed."

"Can we not assist you in some way?" asked the young man, still loth to leave her.

"First save yourselves."

"That would be selfish and cowardly."

"Return then if you will, and—" she faltered and trembled, confused and frightened.

"And rescue you from this place?" said Philip, catching the meaning of the words she hesitated to utter. "We will. Surely one so pure and fair has nothing in common with criminals."

"You are losing precious moments," she said, casting an anxious look into the darkness.

"One word before we go," breathed Philip. "You are not *his* child?"

A shudder of disgust shook her graceful frame. She did not speak, but her expression was sufficient negative to his inquiry.

"God bless you!" were the words with which the three men left her.

The door of the tavern closed, shutting her bright presence from their view, leaving them in the outside darkness. The act seemed inhospitable, but they knew she only wished to hasten their escape.

Frank and Philip could hardly realize their situation. It was more like the experience of an exciting dream. Their lonely ride on the hills—the storm—their bewilderment—their despair—the forest cot—the ride through the storm again—their second shelter and their early host—their suspicions—the discovery of their companion—and to crown all, the unexpected appearance of their lovely rescuer—these memories passed through their minds like the quick and changing movements of a drama born only of unquiet sleep and a wandering brain.

For a moment they stood irresolute.

The less susceptible and more practical Lawton aroused them from their impassiveness.

"Did you come mounted to this trap?" he asked.

"How lovely!" exclaimed Philip Wayne softly, as if to himself. He was thinking of the maiden.

The constable laughed—an irritating laugh it was to the young man, but it had the good effect of bringing him back to the realm of realities.

"Yes," said Frank Leighton, in answer to the officer's question. "Our horses were taken to the stables."

"Let us find them, if possible. We must hasten, too, or River Rick will be upon us with his whole gang."

They entered the rude shed that answered the purpose of a stable, but to their dismay saw that their animals were not there.

"The villains!" ejaculated the constable. "They are burglars, horse-thieves and murderers, all in one. They are wide awake, too, and know the advantage of taking the first move. What now? We must go to Bankton afoot, I suppose. Well, that is better than having our throats cut."

"It seems as if the band have had full intimation of the object of our coming," said Leighton.

"Undoubtedly, and the manner in which they obtained their information is no mystery. You know that to effect anything against them it was necessary to secure the co-operation of the raftsmen—the honest ones. With that object in view I approached them, but with all my caution I have doubtless taken a traitor into my confidence."

This was said as the three men went along. Lawton knew the way to Bankton, and in that direction their steps were turned. The storm still raged, but it was more wind than snow, and as the road was quite direct, they had little difficulty in following it.

They kept a sharp look-out for their enemies, for they knew not at what moment they might approach them.

"Why was it," asked Frank Leighton, in whose mind and in his comrade's also the question had before arisen, "why was it that we were placed in a room adjoining that in which you were confined?"

He addressed himself to the constable.

"It looks like a careless act, but I was supposed to be securely bound—incapable of making a sound or movement—and, moreover, I think the idea was to take all our lives before morning—or, at least, we were to be put out of the way in some fashion—and it mattered little to the villains—"

"Hist!" at this instant warned his hearers.

They crouched in the deeper shadow of a clump of low-boughed hemlocks. Footsteps were heard approaching, and soon the forms of not less than a dozen men were dimly seen passing.

"The party of execution," whispered Lawton grimly, when they had gone by.

"Will they discover our tracks in the snow?" queried Philip.

"I think not," answered the officer. "They would hardly be so keen in observing as that."

"There will be an explosion when our escape is known. What will become of our fair rescuer? Surely they would not harm her," said Philip Wayne, anxiously. But he remembered her troubled and even terrified aspect when he had hinted of evil to herself, and he almost reproached himself for having left her alone in their power. It looked like a cowardly desertion of a defenceless friend, yet what could three—and one unarmed—do against so many?

"They would not dare to visit their wrath upon her head," spoke Frank Leighton, encouragingly. "But it must be terrible for such as she to be among vile and wicked men. Her weakness will be her defence though; her purity preserves her."

What cast this young and beautiful girl into such society? The question perplexed them beyond measure. To Philip Wayne was this matter especially interesting, for up to this meeting with her he had been heart-free, but now his condition was rapidly becoming a different one.

Had not Frank Leighton been a lover already, he too might have yielded to the enchantment of her brief, bright presence. As it was his admiration was none the less. Brave, beautiful and perhaps the victim of wrong, their hands must necessarily be extended to aid her, and their sympathies deeply enlisted in her behalf.

Even their common place companion retained in his mind the vision of her loveliness, and gave frequent expression to his admiration of her beauty and his gratitude for her heroic service.

"I see her yet, boys," he said, "just as she stood in that doorway, with the light trembling in her hand like a star. It was something different from what we expected; I was on the point of hurling toward her the bar I had grasped, when I saw my mistake. Lord! if I had struck that angel! She beamed upon us like the sun from a cloud, just when we were expecting thunder too!"

He grew quite eloquent, even poetical, as the grateful memory of that moment returned, though it must be confessed that his images were rather indicrously mixed with other expressions.

"She has risked her life for us; we must do the same for her," spoke the ardent Philip. And to himself he mentally acknowledged, that to brave danger and death for her sake would be a service most sweet; he rejoiced that his steps had been directed to the wilderness, since he might be instrumental in bringing sunshine to a life that surely found little that was congenial in its present surroundings. It will be perceived that Philip Wayne was already in love; that the image in his mind was of the fair, wild creature whose unexpected coming had been such a heavenly surprise. Well, all things must have a beginning, and their permanency is not to be determined by their slow or sudden origin. Love is sometimes of tardy growth—a plant whose beauty and bloom and fragrance are the product of many days of spring, with frost and darkness often between; again it is of almost instantaneous creation, coming like a sudden morning to the soul, and not by gradual approaches.

With all possible haste, now that they apprehended no further meeting with hostile parties, our three friends made their way to the village of Bankton. It was near morning, however as they drew near the place—the events of the night had so consumed the time—and the earliest risers were already astir, as was to be known by the occasional lights in the windows, and the smoke-drifts flaring from the tops of the low chimneys.

PHILIP IS GUIDED BY THE FAWN TO THE PLACE WHERE FLOSSA GORDON IS HIDDEN.

CHAPTER V.

FLOSSA GORDON.

The forest inn from which, with the aid of its one lovely inmate, our friends had escaped, was not kept by River Rick, but by one of his most trusted and intimate associates. His name was Irvin Gaines. He came from the region of the lower Delaware—so he had stated—years before, bringing with him at the same time or shortly afterward, a beautiful child, whom he called his niece. It was whispered that the commission of a dark crime had caused him to leave his native county, but the rumor became nothing more, and after awhile was almost forgotten. He established himself in business, and material prosperity seemed to attend him; in fact his success was so conspicuous, that the honest and hard-working raftsmen with whom he dealt, sometimes wondered how he obtained his possessions. *Their* gains, with the utmost devotion to their calling, were often slow and small; while his, without much visible effort, were, for that day and region, large.

It was noticed that Gaines was little inclined to associate with strangers from the lower counties, coming to make their annual purchases of lumber, or to attend to their interests in the saw-mills in operation around. He preferred the custom of the men actually engaged in the work of getting out the lumber—the hunters and hewers of the hills, and the raftsmen themselves. He seemed to fear recognition, as if he thought that some day he might see a face he hoped never to behold again.

He was a dark-visaged man, coarse featured and rough-mannered, but not lacking in intelligence, though his language was usually that of the backwoods. He wore a heavy beard, which of itself was almost sufficient to disguise his looks.

It was chiefly in the society of this man and such as he, that the young girl he called his niece lived.

To the inn he returned that wintry night, with his evil companions, for the execution of a purpose that most probably was murder.

He discovered that the intended victims had fled. His rage was terrible; his apprehension great.

The prisoners—for such one actually, and the others virtually were—must have had assistance.

He called the fair girl to his presence. She came, trembling, yet not wholly afraid; she had done a noble act, and she was ready to suffer the consequences.

"How is this, Flossa?" he angrily demanded. "That red-haired rogue has gone, and the others have gone with him. They must have had help. Was it you, girl, that freed them?"

His words formed a question, his tone and manner an accusation.

Flossa, for such was the name he had given her, though whether her own originally or not was not known—trembled anew, but was silent.

"Answer me!" he coarsely cried. "But there's no need of a confession. It's your work, and not the first of the kind. And now let me tell you, Flossa Gordon, there's been enough o' this. You've got me into deeper trouble, I'm afeard, than ever before. You don't know what you've done."

"Saved a human life—three it may be," she answered, heroically. And then she shuddered as she thought of the horror of her position. She knew, though the discovery was comparatively recent, that she was among men whose deeds were too often of darkness.

He seemed amazed at her spirit.

"Ah! you've got pluck, have you? I thought it would show at last. There's fire in your nature, for all you're such a silk-haired thing. But your grit won't bring you good. You're gettin' you're eyes too far open—you peep and pry—you listen and suspect. You would *betray*," he added, fiercely, "if you had a chance."

He made a movement toward her as if to strike her. She showed little fear now—only disgust and proud defiance. Her eyes filled with a light different from the summery brightness that they usually possessed.

"Back!" she cried. "Do not touch me, Irvin Gaines; I do not fear you, but I loathe you. I choose to be no nearer to you."

His looks, as she thus spoke, showed the utmost amazement. Then anger followed, and his hair and beard fairly bristled with wrath.

"You are dangerous—more dangerous than I thought. Obstreperous and disrespectful too. You never even call me uncle any more."

"You know the reason. It is because you inspire me with terror and disgust, and because I believe more firmly every day, that you are not in the remotest degree a kinsman of mine. Unhappy am I to be so in your power, yet I will not dissemble longer. Neither will I obey you, for your commands are too often evil."

Her looks expressed contempt for the man before her; her language was impassioned and scathing. It was evident that long repressed feelings were breaking forth.

Her speech, too, was as correct as it was forcible. How had this young forest creature acquired such intelligent command of words? Refinement she naturally possessed, but education was another thing.

"Go on, go on," sneered her persecutor, with threatening in his tones. "You'll benefit yourself maybe—and maybe you won't. Be careful, Flossa Gordon. You are making me your enemy. You don't know all I am capable of doing."

"I know enough," she muttered tremblingly.

"There's a spice of the devil in me you had better not stir up; there is in most folks, I s'pose, but I'm hard to hold when I'm riled. Beware, Floss."

His voice was low and menacing. Flossa felt her helplessness.

"Will you not let me go?" she asked, pleadingly.

"Go! go where?"

"To my room; I am tired."

"I must keep my eyes upon you, I think. You might give me the slip. Maybe them young fellers will be back for you. One good turn deserves another. Either of 'em is handsome enough to be your lover. You never had a lover, had you, Floss? It's most time. Perhaps I can find you one."

"Let me go," she entreated, more alarmed than ever at his words and manner.

"Not just yet; I'm *afraid* of you. I don't mind telling you so, since you're so plain with me. There's nothin' like an understandin'. You have a tongue that is silvery enough for mere sound, but it might speak some things not so musical to me. Some folks don't know enough; others know too much. *You* belong to the latter class."

He paused, and then added with deadly impressiveness:—

"You must know less or nothing. Do you see my meanin'." The young girl grew sick at heart.

"Will you swear to keep silence?" demanded Irvin Gaines.

The question was put with a deliberate earnestness that testified to the fixedness of his purpose. Flossa Gordon knew that she could not escape the ordeal to which he had brought her. She knew his character and resolution well. She recalled innumerable and painful memories of her past life—commencing at a childhood she could hardly remember, over which a clouding shadow hung, and ending with her present trying position; she wondered whether it would be a terrible thing to die, since her life began to be weighed down with such dark secrets. But she was young, and mere existence at times was sweet to her—in moments when she could forget her trials and perplexities. She was innocent, and the innocent possess courage of which they are not aware until some great occasion calls it out.

"Will you swear?" again demanded her persecutor.

The repetition of the question aroused her; before she had been self-absorbed, gathering strength as it were for the only answer she could give. She turned toward him, but was silent. She was ready to speak, however.

"Yes or no," he cried; "one way or the other."

A wild enthusiasm overwhelmed her; her soul rose to its full height within her; her eyes flashed with a light that was the very lightning of truth.

"If I were to swear, Irvin Gaines," she said, "it would be that I will *not* swear as you desire, but an oath would make my words no stronger. I simply say that I will *not* keep your secrets; that I will remain true to myself and to the instincts that move me against you."

A deep curse fell from her listener's lips. He could have slain her—the purpose was strong enough in his heart, but an invisible power restrained him. Against his wicked might was set her innocent weakness, and she was victor.

Irvin Gaines had little appreciation of the beautiful and sublime in human character. The courage of the girl did not awaken his admiration—it only aroused his anger. Had he not been wholly hardened he would have been moved by her exaltation, perhaps been turned to penitence and reform. He was guilty, and though conscience was dead within him, the torturing unrest that fills the mind of the criminal disturbed him, and the affrighting phantom of Justice rose before him. Though he lived in a region where law was lax and retribution slow-footed, he knew not in what hour he might be called upon to expiate his crimes. He had an almost superstitious belief in retribution, and he began to fear that it was through the agency of the beautiful Flossa that he was to suffer. The thought was maddening, and yet he knew not what to do. Only in the white heat of his passion could he silence her forever, but that moment of danger to her was past, and he stood before her, scowling and dark, but irresolute. Suddenly he changed his mood—changed it in appearance at least—and said in a different tone:

"There, there, Flossa, never mind me. I only thought to frighten you; I meant no real harm. You don't suppose I'd murder you, do you?"

"You have declared you would," she said, trembling again, now that the lofty feeling that had sustained her was deserting her.

"You angered me, Flossa; you threatened me, but I'll *forgive* you. But I must watch you—I must keep you safe. I will not harm you, but you must go with me. Enemies may find me out."

"Go with you? Whither?"

"To a spot deeper in the wilderness."

"Through the cold and snow?"

"You shall not suffer; you shall have pleasant quarters. Come."

She saw his determination. She knew that she had made him her mortal enemy. He distrusted her; feared her, and she must submit to his will. Whither would he take her? Oh that some friendly arm would deliver her from the power of this man and from her terrible surroundings. She had faint memories of another life—of a home of beauty—of purity—of safety. Dim and distant seemed those days of delight. Sometimes she thought that she had never lived them—that kind voices had never addressed her—that loving arms had never held her.

"Come," said Irvin Gaines, sternly.

And she could but go.

CHAPTER VI.

A STRANGE GUIDE.

A strong party of hunters and raftsmen, headed by Frank Leighton, Philip Wayne, and Ralph Lawton, were on their way to the Seven Pines. This force had been gathered through the agency and under the representations of our friends, who had related their adventures to the honest residents of the region. They had found no difficulty in impressing their hearers with the truthfulness of their representations, and a strong feeling had been raised against the evil-doers, who, indeed, as we have said, had previously been suspected, and whose punishment and expulsion were desired. The difficulty had been to single out the guilty parties and to obtain leadership against them. The landlord of the Seven Pines had managed by his shrewdness to keep himself in the general favor of his neighbors and patrons, though a secret distrust of the man had entered many a breast. But it had remained unspoken, and the liberality of Gaines had been to him a safeguard. Now, however, the mask was lifted, and what had been a silent and formless suspicion, turned into broad conviction.

It was not until late in the afternoon of the day of their arrival at Bankton, that matters had been so arranged as to make it possible to proceed against the outlaws. Time was needed for rest and for preparation. Philip Wayne was all impatience to enter at once upon active movements, but the cooler judgment of his companions restrained him. The villains to be sure might save themselves by flight, but it was the opinion of those well-informed, that they would not leave the neighborhood. Indeed, it became a question as to whether the honest residents would not have to leave rather, for there were many rough river characters, not actually linked with the outlaws, but whose instincts led them into brotherly affiliation with the latter.

The storm of the previous night had ceased. The wind had fallen, or veered softly around rather, to the south, and a sudden transition from Winter to Spring was experienced. The sun shone with the occasional ardor it shows in April, and the snow was fast disappearing. The hills and mountain streams were swollen, and the river would soon be in excellent rafting condition. As may be imagined, it was a busy season with the sturdy lumbermen.

The party of which we have spoken reached the inn of the Seven Pines—so called because seven gigantic trees of that species stood near it. They found the place apparently deserted; the doors and windows were closed; every sign of life had departed.

"Be me sowl, but this is could wilcome for sich a large and respictable parthy—I'm large and the rist of ye is respictable," exclaimed Pat McNally, a rollicking Irishman of such imposing physical proportions as to distinguish him from his comrades, though nearly all were of more than ordinary stature. "The dirthy thaves must ha' knowed they were unfit for the company of the likes of us. Ooh! Misther Irvin Gaines, where's yer hospetality this day? Divil a dhrink for the whole of us—and ye so liberal till now. It shows the desate of yer nature, which the same I always give ye cridit for—the desate, I mane. And the pretty darlint ye kipt in this place—what's become of her? A-callin' her yer nece, ye have been, but it's mesilf that's thinkin' she's no more a nace of yourn than St. Patrick is related to the piper of Drogheda. Where's the resimblance between ye?—ye a great murtherin' boor, and she an angel with dainty ways and such a little fut! What's to be done, seein' there's all to do?" he inquired, addressing himself to the others, who during the delivery of the foregoing philippic had been consulting as to their next movement.

"Down with the door!" cried several voices. "The house is a den of thieves; let's spoil their quarters!"

"Down with the door!" shouted Pat, giving the first blow. "Timber's p'inty in this station, and the smashin' of a board or two is no great offince."

The entrance was forced, and the interior explored. Not a person was found within—all was silent and deserted.

"Gone!" cried Philip Wayne, in dismay, thinking of the beautiful Flossa.

"It's the pretty darlint, ye mane, that I know," said Pat, who surmised the chief object of the young man's solicitude. "Oh, Flossie! it's mesilf that'd love ye if I dared. But me woman is jilous now, and all for no raison, as I could shwear, only I won't—and besides ye're too good for the likes of me. Ye're in love with the swate crathur, young man, and no wunder at all, at all. One glimpse of her face wud be enough for me, if I was only circumstanced in ivery way for followin' up the impression. But I ain't, though it's mesilf that believes in courtship and love-makin' and the like, and does me bist to hilp it along."

Philip colored at these plain words, but the good nature of the speaker, and his evident interest in the fair Flossa, prevented any offence being taken.

"If we are to find Irvin Gaines and his accomplices," said one of the raftsmen, "we've no time to lose. He'll be off with River Rick to some safe place if we don't nab him. He knows he's in a fair way to be

unmasked, and maybe he'll have the good sense to leave."

"I think not," spoke another, somewhat to himself. "Gaines likes these hills, and won't leave 'em without plain proof that a majority of the folks hereabouts don't want him."

As nothing was to be gained by remaining longer in the inn, it was resolved to prosecute the search in other directions. The rescue of Flossa Gordon must at least be attempted. It had gradually become known—before the adventure of our three friends at the forest tavern—that she lived in terror of her reputed uncle, and the sympathy of many of the honest raftsmen had been aroused in her behalf. The representations of Frank Leighton and Philip Wayne were all that was needed to awaken active movements in her favor.

The men left the place, pursuing a trail which through the melting snow could be followed without difficulty. It was presumed that it led to the spot that Gaines had sought upon leaving his premises at the Seven Pines.

All the party except Philip Wayne had left the building and were already on the supposed trail of the fugitives—for such they, for the time at least, were. Philip had remained behind a few moments to examine an outbuilding to which his attention had been attracted by a sound made therein, and which had escaped the notice of the others. He hastened to the spot—a low, hemlock-thatched shed—and opening the door was surprised to behold a beautiful fawn. The creature was evidently a pet, and was distressed apparently at the absence of its care-taker. An idea seized Philip Wayne. The fawn perhaps belonged to Flossa. For her it pined, and if released it might reveal the whereabouts of its young mistress by leading him to the place of her imprisonment. He instantly acted upon the thought that occurred to him. He opened the door, and the graceful creature came timidly out; not frightened, but distrustful of the presence of a stranger. It snuffed here and there about the place. The silence and the loneliness seemed to render it doubly anxious and uneasy. It looked beseechingly up into Philip's eyes as if asking him where the gentle hand that fed it had gone. He held wide the door of the bar-room; it bounded in, eager in its search, but disappointed. It was permitted to enter the kitchen. No one was there to pet it. It gave a sad, piteous cry almost human in expression that told of its loneliness and desire.

Philip opened a gate through which exit from the rear of the inn was to be had, and after a moment's scenting of the ground, it bounded away as if upon the track of its mistress. The young man followed with all haste, fearing that he should lose sight of it. It paused, however, placed its nose against the ground, and as he approached again proceeded; not as if in fear, but as if reassured that it was going to the presence of her it so greatly missed.

Philip forgot all about his companions; the fawn was taking a direction quite the opposite of theirs, but he was unmindful of everything but the possibility of finding Flossa.

His graceful guide led him deep into the shadowy forest. He could see footprints in the partially melted snow, and though examination disclosed no evidence that the fair girl had passed, he was confident that the fawn would lead him to her. For a considerable period he followed it, having little difficulty in keeping near it, as it stopped frequently to examine the trail it was pursuing. Philip also gave close attention to the footprints. At one point he thought he detected the delicate mark of a tiny foot in the snow, but he was not certain.

Night was settling over the forest, though it was so different from the night that only twenty-four hours before had fallen with a such a threatening chill upon him and his friend, that he could hardly realize that the change had been so great in so short a period. The sky was perfectly clear; the air quiet, and the snow melting still.

Suddenly the fawn bounded forward with gladness as well as grace expressed in every moment.

"It is nearing its mistress," he said to himself. "Whom will I find with her? Even if more than one of her enemies be her guard, I will not hesitate to attempt her rescue."

Love is very daring and rash.

A low-roofed cabin was soon to be seen ahead; at least, it looked like such, but as he approached saw that it was a mass of rocks of such peculiar natural arrangement, that with a little aid from human hands it resembled a house of wholly artificial construction. It formed a sort of miniature fortress.

The fawn had reached the entrance, and was making desperate and comically futile efforts to get in.

This place like the inn appeared to be deserted. The lovely Flossa might be within; but if so, she was silent. Perhaps she had not yet recognized the presence of her pet.

With some caution Philip approached the door, though since the noise made by the fawn had brought no response, he decided that he incurred no great risk in making a bold and open attempt to enter.

He soon saw that the door was fastened *on the outside*—joyful evidence that she he sought was within. A few minutes hard work sufficed to remove the obstruction. He entered the cabin or cave, whichever it might be termed, the eager fawn preceding him.

A fire burned on the rude hearth. Near it was a couch, and on this lay a beautiful female figure. It was Flossa.

Philip approached her, eager to inform her of a friendly presence, indignant that she should be subjected to such cruel treatment, and rejoicing to be near her once more.

"Flossa," he cried, addressing her by the beautiful forest name she bore.

She awoke in lovely confusion. She had been slumbering in the state of deep exhaustion that follows long excitement, terror and exertion. She heard her name spoken, but associated the sound only with her loving pet. In that moment it did not seem impossible to her for the fawn to address her in human language. The affectionate creature was close by her side, caressing her as well as an animal could, and in every way showing its delight at again beholding her.

"Beautiful Fleta!" she murmured, returning its caresses. "My pet—my faithful—my one true friend!" She had half risen from her couch, as yet unconscious of the presence of Philip. Her flowing hair fell around her neck and over her eyes, interrupting her vision. The young man gazed in enchanted admiration upon this scene.

"You have another friend," he said at last, in response to her closing words to the fawn.

She sprang, startled, from her resting-place. For the first time she became aware of a human presence, and a slight cry of alarm escaped her. In the obscurity she could not clearly distinguish the features of the admiring Philip.

"Do not fear," he said; "it is one of those you last night served, come to do a similar service for you."

An exclamation of joy broke from her lips.

"And you will save me?" she cried; "take me from this, and from the power of that wicked man?"

"I will," he answered rapturously, for the opportunity was to him a heavenly delight.

"Let us leave this place," he continued; "danger may come upon us. Are you prepared to go? The night is not cold."

She had been warmly clad, and was soon ready to depart.

"And Fleta shall go with us—shall she not?" she asked.

"Certainly; it was she that led me hither."

"Good Fleta! true Fleta! what would I do without you?" she cried.

Philip was grateful to the fawn—but it may be questioned whether he was not slightly jealous of the animal, since it absorbed so much of the attention of its fair mistress. He certainly had no right to complain though, for Flossa's heart was filled with gratitude toward the handsome young stranger, while *love*, too, was springing there.

"In what direction shall we go, Flossa? I am sadly ignorant of localities hereabout, and only by chance could conduct you to immediate safety."

"I am myself confused," she answered, musically, "but if we are to reach the river, in that direction, I think." She pointed toward a slope that descended from the right of the cabin.

"Ah! you are right, no doubt. We shall probably find a stream at the bottom of that ridge, and then our course will be comparatively easy. Do you think you can endure the fatigue of a rough walk in the wilderness?" he asked, anxiously.

"Oh, yes," she returned, with confidence. "I was very weary, but I am rested now. I must have slept soundly, for I did not hear you enter—and you must have had some difficulty in forcing the door. If I *did* hear you, I took it to be only a portion of my dreams," she added.

He smiled to think how charming had been her wakening. Then he said, feelingly,

"Poor thing! you were very tired, no doubt. You slept little last night, I know, after we had gone."

"None at all," she replied, with a shudder. "I was so anxious for you—so fearful for myself. *He* was very cruel to me, when he returned and found what I had done."

"The wretch."

"Ah, yes," she sighed, thinking of his dreadful threats.

"He did not do you violence?"

"No, no, not that; but he said fearful things, and—

"Do not pain yourself with such memories. We—my friends and I—gathered, with what expedition we could, a force for your deliverance."

"You were very kind," she said gratefully.

"And even if I fail now, I will continue my efforts in your behalf, until you are out of the power of Irvin Gaines."

"Do not speak of failure," she said, tremblingly. "I would rather die, than return to my home again. It is dreadful there."

"I should think so, to you. You are so gentle, so refined, so—beautiful." He whispered the concluding words with lover-like rapture. Perhaps he should not have breathed them at all there, but his soul was so filled with pity for this young creature, his heart with love and his mind with admiration, that he must give some expression to his feelings.

She blushed, though he could not see her rising color. The clasp of his warm, young hand thrilled her with a subtle joy—so new, so strange!—and his warm words were music in her ears.

They proceeded for some time in silence, satisfied that they were going in the right direction. Fleta, the fawn, kept close to the side of its mistress, as if it feared she might again be taken from her.

Flossa Gordon might be called—as the figure would convey an idea of her innocence, simplicity and beauty—a flower of the forest. She was as wild, as sweet, as graceful as a rose which is the spontaneous growth of the soil; possessing refinement without cultivation, innocence without affectation, and sweetness without conceit. In his mind Philip Wayne had already so named her, but he admitted that it was quite time she was transplanted from the wilderness to a fairer spot.

She was of medium height, as graceful and unconstrained in every movement as the beautiful pet that knew her as its gentle mistress. Her features were regular and delicate; her eyes large, luminous, dark-blue orbs, that seemed to cast a tender light wherever they glanced; her cheeks were like the ripest side of the peach; her forehead marble-fair, and her mouth small, the slight-curved lips parting like unfolding rose-leaves when she spoke. But it was her hair that gave her her crowning charm. From it her name—Flossa—was perhaps derived, as it was a soft, flying mass of natural curls *floss*-like and fibrous-fine.

Her manner had the native grace of unaccomplished girlhood, yet qualified by a shy, sweet dignity all her own.

But it was her evident acquaintance with books and the principles of correct language that as much as anything else mystified and interested Philip Wayne. The song bird needs no page of music to teach it proper notes, the brook flows with a melodious and it may be a grammatical murmur—at least no one ever thought to criticise its delivery!—and perhaps this young forest creature was equally favored by Nature. But no, that would not do; she must have had a teacher. He resolved to ascertain the facts.

"Flossa," he said—he could use no other form of address—"Flossa, you say that nearly all your life has been spent among these hills; yet you speak with the fluency and correctness of one who has had educational advantages. The question is not rude, I trust—you surely have had a tutor?"

"Oh, yes," she answered brightly and artlessly. "Starway taught me."

"Starway! a strange name to know one by. Has he no other?"

"Not that I ever heard; I never thought to ask," she said simply.

"That is musical and poetical enough, but it is very odd."

"I never thought so; you would not think so were you to see him. You would think only of him. He is a noble man, and I love him."

She spoke with artless feeling and warmth. Philip was startled; a jealous fear arose in his heart. Had he already a rival? and one who was to win from him—perhaps had already won—the heart of this sweet forest flower?

"You love him—as a friend, as a father?" he asked with almost trembling eagerness.

"Yes, as both," she replied, greatly to his relief. "You must see him."

"I should be most happy to," said Philip; especially, he might have added, since he was not to behold in Starway a rival for the hand of Flossa.

"Only," she said sadly, "I know not where he is at present. I have not seen him for some time. I almost fear—" her voice dropped to a shuddering whisper—"that I never will again—that evil has been done him because of his friendship to me."

"That were terrible."

"Oh, terrible indeed; but I hope for his return. My uncle, as he calls himself, my wicked uncle—"

"Give him not that title," interrupted her hearer. "He is surely no kin of yours."

"Irvin Gaines, then, feared him, suspected him; and it may be that he has murdered him. But I trust not. He has before absented himself in this way, though never so long."

"You will see him again, then," spoke the young man cheerily. "What is his calling?"

"He is a raftsman, but I think only because of the variety and diversion it gives him. He loves the work, he says; the hills, the river, the forest and all. *They make him forget.*"

"Ah, he has a sorrow, then. Some wrong or misfortune or disappointment has driven him into this seclusion."

"Yes, I think so. But he has never told me all yet. He has promised to, and will when it is proper that he should."

"An interesting character, I should say," remarked Philip.

There was no time for further conversation respecting Starway or any other subject. Their attention must be wholly given to their situation. They had reached the river, but were uncertain as to what course next to pursue—whether to go up or down.

"My friends will be alarmed at my disappearance," said Philip; "we had better make our way to Bankton, I think, as they will doubtlessly return to that point, and we can there join them."

"It is not distant," said Flossa. "I know the way; I have been to this spot before."

"We will go up stream then, since there will be no danger of missing our way. Are you weary, Flossa?"

"Oh, not at all; no more than Fleta is." She turned to the fawn as she spoke and patted its pretty head, for which attention it appeared very grateful.

"I trust our friends will be sufficiently numerous to resist the claim of Irvin Gaines," said her companion anxiously, "for if he learns of your presence, and is bold enough to appear, he will doubtless make a demand for your surrender."

"Oh, I dare not think of being in his power again!" she cried, tremblingly.

"We will yield you only with our lives, Flossa."

"Thanks," she murmured; "but I would not have bloodshed for my poor sake."

"For your *dear* sake," he whispered with a lover's tenderness.

CHAPTER VII.

STARWAY.

"I've lived amid the forest gloom
Until I almost fear—
When will the thrilling voices come
My spirit thirsts to hear?
I thought that I should love my hound,
Hear my resounding gun,
Till I forgot the thrilling sound
Of voices one by one." *Willis.*

Without much difficulty, Philip Wayne and his fair companion reached the village, though it was quite late when they arrived there. A stir nevertheless pervaded the place, for the party who had gone in search of Gaines and his suspected confederates had returned without finding any trace of them. The sudden disappearance of Philip Wayne had caused great uneasiness to Frank Leighton, and indeed to the others, for they began to fear that he had been foully dealt with, though no outcry had been heard and no evidence of a struggle was visible.

The raftsmen having failed to discover the whereabouts of the outlaws, were about to resume their search for the missing Philip, when his opportune arrival, in company with the beautiful forest girl, happily rendered that movement unnecessary, and greatly rejoiced them all.

"The party darlint!" exclaimed Pat McNally, as he beheld the two; "and she's not killed, nor dead, nor lost, at all, at all, but just as live as iver—the swate crathur! Go yer way for this time, Mr. Irvin Gaines, ye ould sinner, since we've got the bist 'of ye, notwithstandin' we thought we hadn't. And how did it happen that ye found the gir-rel, and was not tuk prisoner yerself?"

He addressed himself to Philip, who gave a rapid statement of the facts. "Twas nate done, that same," was the comment of the Irishman. "It's mesilf that'll be followin' deers from this time if they'll lade me to sich retrates and to sich swate company."

He made a comical inclination of his head toward Flossa, who was smiling at the words and manner of the speaker.

There was little time, however, to be spent in listening to his good-natured volubility.

Flossa was placed in the care of the landlady of the public house in which they were, and was by her conducted to the little sitting room—a pleasant, quiet place, in which the weary girl could rest. Mrs. Gore, who was a kindly, sympathetic woman, despite her sanguinary name, had seen Flossa frequently before; and now that the maiden came to her under circumstances so calculated to arouse warm feeling in her behalf, she did all she could to soothe her and make her at ease. She succeeded admirably, notwithstanding the poor girl was still agitated and alarmed, and could not at once forget the uncertainties of her position.

Leaving her in this comparative security and comfort, we return to those whose fortunes were becoming connected with hers—the fortunes of one, at least, for Philip Wayne already felt that his future life was to be powerfully shaped by the events of the few past hours.

"I thought we had lost you, Phil," said his young friend, after Flossa had left them. "I know not why it was, but a terrible apprehension seized me; you disappeared so quickly and silently. We did not even miss you for some minutes—no one dreamed that you could ever be flashed away so suddenly."

"I should have drawn your attention to my action, but there really seemed to be no time—I was fearful of losing my guide."

"It is all well enough now, but I tell you I suffered, Phil. I began to fear that nothing but misfortune was to come of this venture."

"If we accomplish no more than we have done, it has resulted in good already—the rescue of Flossa Gordon from the hands of a wicked man. There is a great wrong here, Frank—a mystery that I shall endeavor to fathom. That beautiful girl is no child of this wilderness; she is well-born—a gentleman's daughter no doubt—and I intend to restore her, if possible, to her rightful position."

Philip spoke with an emotion he did not attempt to conceal, and Frank who understood the mighty motive that now swayed his friend, said warmly:

"It is as you say, Phil, I fully believe; and until the end you seek is attained, I am with you heart and hand."

"Thank you, Frank," said the young man simply and gratefully.

"You love that heroine of the forest, Phil—pardon my plainness. I see it all, and I don't wonder at it a bit. If it were not for Edith——"

"I'm glad there is an Edith," interrupted Philip; and then, with pretended jealousy, he said, "I don't want you to cross my path, Frank, for I have trouble enough already."

"Happiness enough too, I should say—in the prospective."

"Yes, yes, but it is the present that perplexes me. Flossa Gordon is already more to me than my life. I will never surrender her to Irvin Gaines or any other villain while I live, but whither can I take her?"

"Why down the river of course, and at once—to-morrow," answered Leighton. "Let this nest of burglars, and whatever else they may be, for the present go, and attend to your fair charge."

"*Her* safety must be assured," returned Philip decisively. "But how can she be conveyed from this place?"

"Fix up a cabin on a raft, and descend the river in that manner," said Frank, who appeared to see a way through every difficulty. "It would be charming."

"But the roughness of the men with whom she would be compelled to associate," objected Philip, who, with a lover's inconsistency and over-tenderness, forgot that Flossa had already been forced to endure worse things than a voyage under the proposed circumstances.

"The raftsmen are a wild set, that is true," said his companion, "but the majority of them are gallant and honorable men; I can answer for that. The young girl will be as safe from insult and harm with them as she could be anywhere but in a parent's home."

Philip's face brightened.

"And you think the descent of the river can be made in that way?"

"Certainly I do; and a delightful way it will be too. Have you no appreciation of romance?"

"It would be pleasant, no doubt; I was only thinking of Flossa's comfort; more than was necessary, perhaps."

"She is a real heroine, and will not shrink from trifles."

"There is one other matter that troubles me," said Philip; "you know that I cannot marry Flossa at once, though I will make her my wife, if I can win her love, just as soon as possible. In the meantime where can she be placed?"

"Why, you foolish fellow!" cried Frank. "I believe I shall have to take charge of her for you. Edith's parents will receive her most kindly; in that dear old Quaker homestead she will find a refuge indeed."

"Capital!" exclaimed the delighted lover. "I never thought of that. Oh, I know they will—they are so kind to all. Now that these perplexities are removed I feel better, Frank. You know the question of these proprieties could not be ignored by me."

"I understand you, Philip; you merely wished to avoid embarrassing Flossa in any degree, and to provide for her comfort in every way. All will be well, I assure you. And now let us see some of the leading spirits among these raftsmen, and inform them of our intention to relinquish further attempts against Rick and his band. They will give us a passage on a raft, and assist us in defending our fair companion against any enemy, if such occasion should arise."

The conversation of the two young men had been held apart from the others, whom they now joined.

Expressing their intention to begin the descent of the Delaware on the morrow, they were cordially assured that every facility would be afforded them to make the proposed trip safely and comfortably. Arrangements were therefore made to this effect.

As the company in the bar-room were about to separate for the night—though a sufficient number were to remain as a guard for Flossa—the door of the tavern was opened, and the figure of a man of striking appearance was seen on the threshold. He was instantly recognized by the majority of those present, and received a welcome of unusual warmth from them.

"It's mesilf that's glad to see ye, Misther Starway!" cried Pat McNally when his turn came to take the new-comer's hand. "And we believed ye dead, we did, or something as bad as that. But if ye were, ye're come to entirely, and that's enough, bedad."

This man then, thought Philip Wayne, was the mysterious Starway of whom Flossa had spoken, and to whom she was indebted for fatherly care and instruction. He surveyed the stranger closely.

Thick masses of grayish hair fell upon his face and around his neck, but despite the somewhat venerable appearance thus given him, his form was still unbent and his step elastic. His eyes were dark, set deeply beneath an expansive forehead, and of extraordinary keenness and brilliancy. The expression of his countenance was rendered almost severe by these piercing orbs, but a soft and pensive melancholy shone in his features, toning the stern look that was at first noticeable. This expression of mingled sadness and sternness gave a charm to his face, and aroused in the minds of those who for the first time met him an involuntary interest that was sure to grow upon them.

Starway was evidently no ordinary man—no common ranger of the hills, but one who had lived and perhaps suffered in a higher sphere and among other associates than now were his. He was coarsely, yet not unpicturesquely clad. A green blouse, confined at the waist by a broad belt of tanned deer-skin, reached nearly to his knees. He wore heavy top-boots and yellow buck-skin trowsers. A hunting-knife hung in a sheath at his side, and over his shoulder was a leathern strap, apparently used for carrying his rifle, though he was at present unarmed. A dark fur cap, handsomely fringed, completed his attire.

After he had greeted and received the greetings of his acquaintances—all of whom seemed to be his friends—he was in backwoods fashion introduced to Philip Wayne, Frank Leighton and Mr. Lawton.

The slight surprise with which he first beheld them soon gave way to cordiality, and with a grace that hinted of superior culture he replied to their salutations and offered his own.

Our two young friends were immediately delighted with the man. His simple manners, his kindly speech and his evident intelligence prepossessed them at once in his favor. They recognized in him a character quite the superior, in point of intellectual and social qualities, of the rough men with whom he had chosen to associate.

The little that Flossa Gordon had said concerning him, had powerfully interested Philip Wayne in the man who had been such a friend to her; and now that he had met Starway the feeling was not in the least abated. What was the mystery of his life? That question, however, was not to be answered just then.

Starway was informed of the presence of Flossa, and had it not been so late he would have made his arrival known to her. He was delighted to learn of her safety, and earnestly approved of the steps that were to be taken to remove her forever from the tyranny of Irvin Gaines.

"Poor thing!" he said; "she is the victim of a fearful wrong, I do not doubt. She is no kin to the man who claims her as his niece. I have secretly endeavored to unravel the mystery that attends her, but without avail. I have watched over her for years—instructed her to the best of my ability, and made her happy in her wild forest home. It was necessary that I should absent myself from this region for a time, but I did not apprehend personal harm to my charge. But she is changing from girlhood to womanhood, and of late a knowledge of evil doings has come to her; she is too wise, too noble, too brave for Irvin Gaines. He fears her, and would not hesitate to take her innocent life, if he thought she would ever have the opportunity to appear as a witness against him. It is terrible for such as she to dwell amid such surroundings—for her birthright is doubtless wealth, position and the love of many hearts."

Frank and Philip listened eagerly to what Starway said, and when he had concluded made many inquiries relating to the fair girl, all of which he cheerfully answered. He detected the impassioned interest that Philip Wayne took in Flossa, and with satisfied delight muttered to himself:

"It will all be well for my poor girl yet; this gallant young fellow already loves her, and he will make her a princely husband. He's true and good, I'm sure; I've met with traitors and villains in the world, but he is not of them. My poor, lonely Flossa! your heart will turn to his like a flower to the sun, and he will be a living light to your life. Sometimes I think that you are *my* child—the little golden-haired daughter I lost; but *that* cannot be. *My* life is in a shadow that will reach to the grave; but oh! for you may there be brightness and bloom in the coming years."

It was late—very late—when the last light was extinguished in the Bankton inn that night, and all had retired to slumber. The morrow for the raftsmen would be a busy day, and for our friends one of new experience and excitement. Frank and Philip slept refreshingly, though their brains were dream-thronged indeed; Flossa tossed and started in her slumbers, for the demon-face of Irvin Gaines haunted and frightened her; Starway passed a portion of the night in reflection and wakefulness.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Tale of My Grandmother's.

"This relative of mine,
Was she seventy and nine
When she died?
By the canvas may be seen
How she looked at seventeen,
As a bride." *Locker.*

"I am going to tell you a tale, my dears, of something that happened to me nearly sixty years ago; and though you know poor old granny can't be trusted to remember where she put her specs five minutes since, you may depend upon it she remembers what occurred on a certain August night when she was younger than any of you are now. You must know that when I was a girl I was thought quite a beauty, and I had as many beaux in a day as anybody. But there—that is neither here nor there. One of them was a soldier—your grandfather." (She pointed to his portrait in her brooch.) "And, you may smile, the girls of that period liked a military coat quite as well as girls do now. I thought him perfection when I met him first at Leamington Spa, and ever after.

"But, like all the charming men I ever saw, he hadn't a penny, and his old uncle had a temper as hot as Sir Harry Pottinger's curry, and a constitution like a tenpenny nail. That, I recollect, was what my poor father said when my handsome beau ventured to hint at an alliance one day in the pump-room at Bath. That was in January. Six long months and six long letters passed for both of us, and August found me at school at Wellesdean, and your grandfather's regiment quartered at Warwick. He was always walking over, though it was a good seven miles; at least in those days he used to tell me he walked; but I found out afterwards that he sometimes left his horse at the blacksmith's in the village, and that looked as if he rode. But ignorance was bliss then; and I think it was the sight of his handsome brown face and soldierlike figure in the laurel walk at Wellesdean that finally turned the scale in his favor.

"Our meetings were very romantic.

"Your grandfather had to climb three terribly high stone walls, break through a hedge or two, and clamber up a ha-ha fence, at imminent risk of mantraps and spring-guns, which certain boards declared were set all over the grounds of Wellesdean House, before he could possibly reach the laurel walk, at the very end of which, dressed in a book muslin and mighty wide blue sash, I was waiting for him.

"And then, our delicious secret—for, of course, two or three of my most beloved bosom friends knew all about our attachment, and lent me every possible assistance in making excuses to Miss Maybrick for walking out just at the very time when Edward was due. How we used to talk everything over; and how reluctantly they left me, to keep watch whilst I talked to your grandfather in an old summer-house in a remote spot in the grounds! How often the dear timid things would run to the back of the arbor, and whisper between the leaves—'Oh, Letty, dear, pray come; we feel sure we hear somebody coming!' And when he was gone, how they all twined their arms around me, till they knew what he had said in our ten minutes' interview.

"It was during one of those highly improper meetings, when the young ladies on the watch came as usual, in a state of dreadful trepidation and alarm, to tell me that they were quite positive they heard the rustle of Miss Maybrick's silk in the distance, that my gallant swain threw himself at my feet, as I was about to run off with my dear young friends and seek the friendly shelter of the school-room, and with his knees on the hard pege of wood with which that summer-house was floored—a dreadfully uncomfortable position for him it must have been—he began:

"'Miss Eden—Letitia—I must implore of you to put an end to this wretched suspense. Say that my devotion is returned. Oh, let me know my fate, Letitia! I feel you cannot say No!'

"At last I pronounced the fatal 'Yes,' and your grandfather gave one great jump that sent the girls scampering off, seized me in his arms, and declared I had made him the happiest man in the universe.

"But he did not occupy this enviable position long, or happiness and contentment don't go together; for he began to say that now he should never be happy until he could call me his wife, so that it should be out of the power of anybody to separate us.

"'But, my dear Edward, I remonstrated, 'it was but this moment that you called yourself the happiest man in existence. Unhappy so soon?'

"'Happy, yet unhappy,' he replied, looking at me with his dark eyes. 'For how soon must we part, not to meet again for two long days? Oh, Letty, is it not monstrous that your father and my cantankerous old curmudgeon of an uncle should be such surly rascals?'

"'Speak for your uncle, Edward, please,' I said, firing up; but, melting the next instant, I added—'though it is cruel, very cruel, of my dear father not to see your merits. I never knew him so unreasonable before.'

"'Your father is the soul of honor, and—I ought not to complain of him, but of the fate that made me a penniless soldier; but—but I love you, Letty, as no man ever loved a woman before, and my love makes me bold. The proverb says, "Faint heart ne'er won fair lady,"'—he sank his voice into a whisper; and the end of it was he begged me to elope—talking wildly of Gretna Green and special licenses, and a dozen things besides.

"I told him I could never consent to deceive my dear father, though I would willingly make any other sacrifice for him. Your grandfather, my dears, had a natural turn for diplomacy. He let the matter drop then; but revived it in every letter he wrote to me, and at every interview—which was every day afterwards. And at last, like a very naughty girl as I was, I allowed him to persuade me that, as my father would never give his consent to our marriage, we should be wed without it. My two bosom friends were, of course, delighted at the prospect of such a romantic affair, and promised to give me their invaluable assistance. We laid our heads together, and, being three women, we had soon devised a plan.

"Wellesdean Hall, where Miss Maybrick received her pupils, was an old country house which was no longer wanted by the landed proprietor on whose estate it stood. He had married a rich wife, and lived at her home in another part of the country. So, after standing empty for a great many years, it was at last let for a ladies' school. Old as it was, it had an unfinished look about it. We lived entirely in one wing, probably newer than the main building, which was in the style of Elizabeth, elaborate in carvings and enrichments, now decaying and falling to pieces. There was one old room—the picture gallery it was called—in the main building, that was sometimes used as a school-room. It was the only room to which access could be obtained from our newer wing of the building. The doors of every other room had been nailed and barricaded up. And this picture gallery was never used as a school-room in my time; but we were allowed to walk in it, and allowed to play at battledore and shuttlecock among the old canvases on wet days. The floor had been pronounced unsafe by Miss Maybrick's coachman, footman, steward, and factotum, John Barnes. What Barnes said was law with Miss Maybrick on all these points, for she had taken him with the house. He had been left in charge by Captain Carlton, the owner; and having for many years enjoyed the place all to himself, he resented a ladies' school in his old age as something of an intrusion upon the rights of property.

"Now, all that stood between our plan for my escape and its success was the dictum of John Barnes. The weather had been remarkably hot, and we three conspirators had begged the other girls to ask Miss Maybrook to let us have our beds moved—some five or six of them—into this old picture gallery, where we were sure we should be so much cooler than in our common dormitories. With her usual kindness, Miss Maybrick consented readily that our beds should be moved, if Barnes said the floor was safe. When we went to ask him for his authority to make the move, we felt perfectly certain he would say that the floor 'would not be safe for six young girls, let alone six bedsteads.' Such was the perversity of Mr. Barnes' nature, however, that he, without a moment's hesitation, replied to our inquiries by telling us 'the flo'er 'ud bear a haystack.'

"We had insinuated that the proposal to move us came from Miss Maybrick, and that we felt rather annoyed at it, as we were delightfully cool where we were. Barnes intended to be as disobliging as usual, but unconsciously played right into our hands.

"Chaperoned by my bosom friends, I met Edward as usual in the laurel walk. All was arranged. At twelve o'clock that night he was to be at the first window of the gallery in the old building with a ladder. A post-chaise was to wait at the end of the lane.

"I waited for bedtime—very nervous, very anxious; and, now the time drew so near, with a feeling that I was doing something very desperately wicked. There were six beds at pretty wide intervals along the floor of the old gallery. The pictures that hung on the dark wainscot were dropping from their frames with age, but some of them were the work of masterlike hands. Old ladies in stomachers and farbelows; old gentlemen in trunk hose, with rapiers at their stout sides; a bishop in a full-bottomed wig; and a judge in scarlet and ermine. They used to awe us girls in the broad daylight; but at night, they glared fearfully as the moonlight played upon their aged features. The judge, I could have sworn, shook his head. I was positive one old lady's hand moved forward to point at me; and the figures in a great picture between the windows, representing the murder of the Princes in the Tower, seemed to move noiselessly to and fro. The night was very hot; the scene was new to us all; and our beds were too far apart for us to talk, even if the French teacher had not been there to prevent it. They were all disinclined to sleep, I knew, by the restless tossing about in the beds; and if they did not go to sleep, Edward would be caught at the first sound of the ladder.

"I am now old and calm enough, but as a girl I was nervous and excitable. My situation began to prey upon my mind, my imagination played all sorts of tricks with me; and at half-past ten by the stable-yard clock, I was just in that condition when a girl feels she must scream or jump up, or she will go mad. Thick clouds hid the moon, so that we had light on the pictures only at intervals. When they were visible, their glee was fiendish—they were making the most horrible grimaces.

"'Miss Clarke, I am not asleep,' said the youngest of the party. 'I can't go to sleep for the pictures.'

"There was instantly a chorus of—

"'We're not asleep, Miss Clarke.'

"I pretended I was asleep. It was a relief to hear the others' voices; but my suspense on Edward's account was terrible.

"I did not think so much of my disgrace if I were caught, as of what they would do to him. Barnes had a gun. It hung in the hall. Perhaps he would shoot him!

"At last all was quiet. It was half-past eleven. I stole gently to the appointed window to look out. I was creeping back again, when I was startled almost out of my senses by a shriek.

"'There!—there! Oh, Miss Clarke, there is something white moving about in the room!'

"I was in bed again. A candle was lighted. To my inexpressible horror, I heard the French teacher say if it were put into the basin it couldn't do any mischief, and might be left to burn itself out.

"Another quarter of an hour passed in terrible suspense. I expected every moment to hear Edward's ladder, and I saw not the least chance of dressing myself.

"I started up in bed. Listened with all my ears. All six of us did so too. The most extraordinary noises were being made overhead in the uninhabited part of the house.

"'Oh!'—an exclamation of wild fear sounded from all our lips.

"'Oh, Miss Clarke, what are they doing?' said the young lady who before had seen something white.

"I had been brought up a skeptic about ghosts; but now I believed in them. The most dismal howls and wails, the rattling of chains, fearful human cries of mortal anguish, the falls of heavy bodies on the floor. Ghosts, ghouls and vampires seemed to be holding their revels above us. One girl had fainted. I was in a cold perspiration. We were huddled together like sheep, trembling and exclaiming—

"'Oh, fetch Miss Maybrick'—oh, fetch Miss Maybrick! Oh, what is it? What are they doing?'

"The cries and falls continued. We were in the part of the gallery most remote from the supernatural revels over our heads. Over the very window that I was to have left Wellesdean by!

"The clock struck twelve.

"And the French teacher pointed at the window, turned livid and awful to look at, and fell on the floor in a dead faint.

"She had seen a Face!

"Panic-stricken, the others rushed off through the school-room to wake Miss Maybrick. I was left alone in the gallery, satisfied that something awful was going on overhead, with the French teacher and one of my schoolfellows swooning on the floor.

"A low voice spoke through the open window. I hailed it with transport. It was Edward. I felt safe with his strong arm round me. I was clad only in my dressing-gown. The other prostrate women were likewise partly dressed. Edward was for braving all, and rushing up-stairs, breaking open doors, and finding out whence came those fearfully human cries. But I restrained him; and just got him out through the window as all the household came trooping into the gallery.

"'Edward,' I whispered in his ear, 'pray leave me. I am ill—*and I will never elope!*'

"I saw him go up not down his ladder.

"Miss Maybrick, imperturbable as ever, entered the room, holding on high a chamber candle. She was followed by Barnes, and all the servants and teachers. She ordered the Frenchwoman and the fainting girl to be removed to her room, told the housekeeper to sit with them, and quickly added—

"'The first person I see frightened, I shall be ashamed of. We know these alarming noises must proceed from natural causes. I shall at once investigate the matter. Barnes, bring the keys of the rooms overhead, and a crowbar.'

"In the wake of Barnes and Miss Maybrick, at a respectful distance, we followed. Up the stairs that Barnes declared would break under our weight; along old rooms with great bedsteads in them, their legs rotted and

broken away, past old mirrors, boxes, legless chairs and shattered dressing-tables—all covered with the dust of ages—we walked trembling in the wake of that Spartan woman.

"In reply to a question of hers, her henchman said—

"'This be over the pictu-er gallery, ma'am.'

"'Then here we must look.'

"She looked up first, and there on the beams sat the cause of our fearful night—

"About a dozen great buff screech owls, sitting as calmly as if nothing had happened.

"I shrieked, and fell into one of the kitchenmaids' arms now.

"Edward—brave man!—had been before us. He had got in with his ladder, and lay crouching behind a pile of old furniture, with Miss Maybrick's candle lighting his face, and Miss Maybrick's horrified gaze upon him.

"The principal at Wellesdean Hall was not afraid of ghosts, but she was of young gentlemen.

"Edward suffered himself to be arrested by Barnes; and to be seen off the premises, after he had given his name and address.

"In tones of scorching ire, Miss Maybrick said—

"'I need not ask who it is. There is the bad girl—a disgrace to her sex and to my care! I was prepared for something of this sort, and I had written to her father. He will judge her in the morning.'

"I was locked up, in what state of mind you can guess. The morning and my father came. He was always very changeable. Most unexpectedly, he forgave me, hushed the matter up, and told me if I loved Edward I might have him, as he was a very excellent young man. Soldiers were always daring. He recollected what he would have done the same thing for my mother.

"Next day, I read in the morning Chronicle of the death of poor Edward's uncle. I am afraid my father knew it before I did.

"I was married to your grandfather in four months' time, and we were happy ever after."

Such was my grandmother's little bit of romance.

Poor dear old lady!—at the very last Christmas party she lived to be present at, she told it with as much gusto as she had done on any such occasion years and years before.

"LORD WALTER'S WIFE."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

People said it was a brilliant match. Cressie was such a sweet girl, so pretty and accomplished, and Walter Everett was rich, and could give her such an elegant home. Cressie had been a governess before she married Walter, and everybody thought it was such a splendid thing for her. Cressie herself was dazzled at the first. To go from almost servitude into affluence, into a splendid mansion and reign as its mistress, to be appareiled in dainty robes, and have servants to do her bidding, it was bewildering to a girl like Cressie. Then she had time to devote to her great passion, music, and a superb piano and skilful teachers were at her command. Books, too, such as she had always longed for, lined the library walls, and, oh, it was all like fairy land.

For a year, she was happy as a bird; then somehow, a strange discontent stole into her heart. What was it, how came it there? At first she did not know, could not tell. Only she was restless, dissatisfied, longing for something she knew not what. As the days went by, she felt it more and more, and by and by she knew what it was that she longed for. It was *congenial companionship*. That was the one thing her husband could not give her. He was a business man, bound up in his business affairs. He spent but little time in his home, and when he was there, while kind, thoughtful, and attentive, he did not seem to care for her music, only that it added to her pleasure, and the books she loved, he knew nothing of, and cared less. He had furnished a fine library, according to a friend's taste; an old college friend of his who was with him when the mansion was being fitted up for his bachelor home, before he had seen Cressie Packham, or thought seriously of marriage. But he never opened the books that were in the library; he was glad his wife and her friends enjoyed them, and she had only to hint a desire for any book, and it was brought to her.

Yet she grew dissatisfied under this life. She wanted her husband to read and appreciate the books with her: she wanted to discuss them with him. She wanted him to listen to and criticise her music; wanted him to say he liked this, or disliked that—that she played this finely, or her execution of that might be bettered. But he never did. He would sit and hear her play and sing, and say "That's nice" to it all, or "I am glad you play so well, Cressie, it is a great accomplishment." But that was all. He never dreamed that she wanted more, and she could not tell him of her dissatisfaction, he was so good, and kind, and thoughtful of all her *bodily* wants.

Once she did tell him that she was very lonely, and wished he could stay at home more. "That is impossible," he said, "but I am to have a visit from an old college friend next week, and you will have some one to talk to then, Cressie. He will know all about your books, and your music, and will be able to entertain you much better than I could. During the years I was in college, every lesson, nearly, that I had at all, I have him to thank for. I hated study, but he would shame me into getting part of my lesson, and then would help me through recitation. A capital fellow was Howard More, and I am glad he's coming. He writes that this will be his last visit as a *bachelor*. Next fall he is to be married. Glad of it; he will make a splendid husband. Now get everything in order, dear, for he is very particular, and wants everything in order, and is quite a critic. I want him to find my wife beyond criticism in her toilets, and the arrangements of her rooms, as of course he will. Enjoy his society while he is here, and I shall be happy in knowing you are so."

Howard More came, at the appointed time. Both he and Cressie started with surprise when they met. Neither had expected to find the other so attractive, personally. Walter had written that his wife was lovely, but that was to be expected from a young husband. Howard did not think to meet this gold-haired girl, with the peachy cheeks, and large, dreamy blue eyes. Cressie had not imagined Howard so tall and strong. She had thought of him as frail and scholarly in appearance. But his cheeks glowed with the hue of health, and his dark eyes were brilliant and piercing.

The favorable impression each conceived of the other was strengthened upon more intimate acquaintance.

"Your friend is a most agreeable gentleman and I like him much," Cressie said to her husband. And "Your wife is a thoroughly charming lady; you are to be congratulated," Howard told Walter.

So Walter left his home every morning with the pleasant conviction that his wife was going to enjoy herself, and his friend would be well entertained, even though he must necessarily absent himself.

Howard More was well entertained, and enjoyed the days thoroughly. Cressie had fine conversational abilities, and they discussed books and authors and paintings hours together. Then Howard was a fine musician and possessed a superb tenor voice, and the two made the long rooms ring with music.

"Such a pleasant day as this has been," Cressie would often say to her husband; and "I have been most delightfully entertained by your wife," Howard would assure him.

So the days went by. Howard rode about the city and the surrounding country, sometimes alone, but oftener with Cressie as a companion and "guide," since she knew all the points of interest, and it was impossible for Walter to accompany him.

"You and Howard ought to go to this or that place to-day," Walter would frequently say, naming some point of interest. "I cannot go, and I want him to see it."

A few times Walter did accompany them, but his business would not permit of frequent absence.

So they rode, in the carriage and on horseback, and they walked together, and read, and sang, and the days drifted by, all too fast.

Howard More was a man of keen, refined tastes. He was passionately fond of all beautiful things, and a beautiful woman had a great power over him. He admired Cressie's lovely face, her dead-gold hair, her softly rounded figure, as well as her richly stored mind.

Thrown so much in her society, he could not but notice and feel the influence of her many attractions. He confessed to himself, that she fascinated him more than any other woman he had ever met, his *betrothed* not excepted. She, (the betrothed) was so gentle, and childish, so unlike this magnificent woman, whose blue eyes held him in a subtle spell. He loved her dearly, but he *admired* Cressie exceedingly. And was it not right that he *should* admire his friend's wife, and enjoy her society? So he reasoned with himself about the matter, when his heart first warned him of danger. Ah, these heart warnings! they come to us all, when we, like children, begin to play with fire. If we heed them, we are saved. If we turn a deaf ear and will not listen or heed, they cease to trouble us after a time, and leave us to the knowledge gained by experience, that fire will burn and scorch, and leave scars.

As for Cressie, she awoke to the knowledge one day that Howard More's society was necessary to her happiness. That Howard More was dearer to her than any other man on God's earth, her husband not excepted, and that to part from him would be bitter as death.

A strange confession, surely, for a wife to make to her own heart. But she made it, and after making it, she did not try to control her thoughts, to put on a mantle of reserve and chill Howard More, until he should take his departure without having suspected her secret. She did not do this. She was, with all her intellect, wayward, passionate, and unreasonable when crossed. The knowledge that she was bound to a man she only liked, and must be forever separated by the law from the man she loved, fretted and aggravated her; and she grew to forget all her comforts, all her husband's great goodness and kindness to her, in this thought.

One golden day they stood in the garden together. They had been chatting sociably, but a silence fell between them. A silence deep and dangerous. Cressie stood leaning against a lilac tree. Her position revealed the swelling outlines of her graceful figure. Her long hair fell over her shoulders in golden masses. Her long lashes shaded her eyes, her scarlet mouth was a trifle drooping and sad in expression. She had never looked more beautiful, more dangerous. She lifted her eyes and met his gaze, and both flushed hotly.

He was silent a moment, and then he spoke. "I am going away 'day after to-morrow," he said.

She looked up suddenly with pain and surprise in her face. "Oh, why go so soon?" she said.

"So soon?" he smiled. "I have been here six weeks already. I *dare* not stay longer."

"Dare not?" She understood his meaning, and she was willing he should know that she did. "Dare not? why I thought you more courageous than to be afraid to linger here a little longer."

"It is not for myself alone," he answered, "that I am afraid, it is for others."

"Never mind the others; it is my request that you remain."

"But I dare not—for my own sake, and for the sake of the *fair* girl who is soon to be my wife, I must go. The wedding-day is approaching."

"It could be postponed, and thus permit you to prolong your visit."

The selfishness of her words, albeit he knew they were prompted by love for him, struck a chill of disgust to his heart. One of Mrs. Browning's poems sprang into his mind.

"You remind me of 'Lord Walter's Wife,' of whom Mrs. Browning sings," he said, a little coldly. "Do you remember it? No? Then I will repeat a portion of it:

"'But why do you go?' said the lady,
While both sat under the yew,
And her eyes were alive in their depths,
As the kraken beneath the sea-blair.

"'Because I love you!' he answered,
'Because you are too fair,
And able to strangle my soul
In a mesh of your gold-colored hair.'

"'Oh, that,' said she, 'is no reason;
Such knots are quickly undone,
And too much beauty, I reckon,
Is nothing but too much sun.'

"'Yet farewell so,' he answered,
'The sun-stroke's fatal at times,
I value your husband, Lord Walter,
Whose gallop rings still from the limes.'

"'Oh, that,' said she, 'is no reason!
You smell a rose from the fence;
If two should smell it what matter!
Who grumbles, and where's the pretence.'

"'But I,' he replied, 'have promised
Another when love was free,
To love her alone, alone,
Who star and alone loves me.'

"'Why that' said she, 'is no reason,
Love's always free I am told.
Will you vow to be free from the headache,
On Tuesday, and think it will hold?'"

He paused, looked at her.

"Well," she said, "did he stay, or did he go after all."

"He stayed as a friend, not as a lover; he stayed to prove to her that he could be her loyal friend, no more. I cannot do that. I shall go to prove to you that I respect you and your husband too much to bring a stain upon either name. We have spent some happy hours together, we could spend more. Our tastes and fancies are similar, and have been happy, innocently so, thus far. We cannot be so longer. I must go."

She was too proud to urge him more, and so he went. But after he was gone she went to her room, and gave vent to an agony of despairing tears. She was like a spoiled child, surrounded by rich and costly toys, with every comfort and luxury, yet crying because it is denied a sharp knife which it covets as a plaything. For days Cressie felt hard and bitter toward the whole world, and felt herself the most unhappy woman in the world. But one night her husband was brought home almost dead from the effect of a fall. His head was bruised, and he had some severe internal injuries. For weeks his life hung upon a thread. During those weeks, Cressie had ample time to see her error, and realize how dear her husband was to her, to remember his goodness, and to thank God for her escape from the perils that she had escaped from. When her husband was once more restored to health, there was not a truer, happier wife in the land then Cressie Everett. She never told him of her folly—it would have wounded him unnecessarily, and she knew her secret was safe with Howard More. She thanks God, to-day, as she sits surrounded by her fair children, that Howard More was so strong as to resist even her pleadings for a prolongation of his visit. And afar off, Howard More, happy in his marriage relations, thanks God too.

ONE OF LIFE'S HEROINES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

In the restful quiet of the June evening, Margaret Vane and young Dr. Leigh stood under the blossoming sweetbriar by the gate, and talked together.

His words were low and full of tender accents, and Margaret smiled to hear the pretty things he was saying, and let him hold her hand, as lovers like to do.

For they were lovers. Dr. Leigh had come to Danforth six months before, and almost the first young woman whose acquaintance he formed was Margaret Vane. From the first, she attracted him. There was something out of the common about her; something more refined and womanly than about most young women he knew.

From the first insight he got into her home-life he knew she was not happy. Her father was dead, and her step-mother was a fretful, indolent woman, who shifted the care of the four headstrong, unruly children upon her step-daughter's shoulders.

After his first call at Margaret's home, young Dr. Leigh came often, and Margaret learned to look for his coming with pleasure which she could not conceal. Her life was so narrow, so hedged-in by cares and perplexities, and so destitute of the things which she most coveted, that Dr. Leigh's visits were the pleasantest hours she knew, and she looked forward to them with a sense of rest and relief.

When he asked her to be his wife she did not hesitate long in giving him her answer. Her present life was so barren of beauty and brightness that any other seemed welcome in comparison with it. And then she loved Dr. Leigh. If she had not, she would never have consented to become his wife. She had too strict ideas of truth and honor to become the unloving wife of any man.

"Lucia is coming home to-morrow," she said, as they stood there at the gate. "You have never seen her. Come over and get acquainted."

"I will do so," he answered. "From what I have heard of her, I expect to see a paragon of female beauty and accomplishments."

"Lucia *is* pretty," she replied. "You haven't any idea how plain I appear beside her."

"You are pretty enough for me," Dr. Leigh answered gallantly, breaking off a branch of half-blown buds and winding them in among her brown hair.

She was not unattractive, and yet she was what most people would have called plain. The only really handsome feature which her face possessed was her eyes. They were brown and deep and full of thoughtful shadows, which shifted and became luminous when she was pleased and interested.

"It is worth saying a great deal, just for the sake of seeing your eyes smile," Dr. Leigh said, running his fingers through her hair in a tender, caressing way. "You haven't any idea how beautifully they light up. I have seen little pools of water in the woods, shaded by ferns and bushes; by and by the wind would blow the ferns aside, and the sunshine would dive down into the little pools, and they would flash and sparkle, and fairly seem to laugh and talk. Your eyes are like them, my Marguerite."

That was his pet name for her, Marguerite. Perhaps it was not wholly inappropriate. There was a kind of daisy-grace about her, and her life was something like the daisies, lonely and unattractive, and full of harsh experiences.

"I expect you won't find time to talk to me after Lucia comes," she said, with her eyes on the far-away hills, wrapped in white mists of moonlight.

"You aren't jealous already, are you?" he asked.

"No, not exactly jealous but—" she hesitated, and then, with a sudden shadow coming in her face, she added: "I've always had to give up the best things of life to Lucia, and I don't want her to steal my lover away; and if she should happen to take a fancy to you, she would want me to put aside my claim. I don't know what put the idea into my head, but it came there just then, that Lucia would try to win you away from me."

"What a foolish girl!" he cried. "What do I care for any one but you? Haven't I promised to be your own true lover all my life, little Daisy? And, after loving you, could I love any one else?"

Dr. Leigh laughed softly, as he put his hand under her chin, and lifted her face to meet his kisses.

And then he went away and left her standing there at the gate. She watched him until he was lost in the shadows, with a tender stir of gladness at her heart. Hers, all hers—the only thing she had ever had in her life all her own. Everything else had to be shared with others, or else given up entirely. Her lover they could not expect to lay claim to, and yet—they *might*. Stranger things had happened than that, she knew.

"How kind he is," she whispered to herself. "And so handsome; so noble."

Arch Leigh's face was handsome enough, but it was not a strong face. It lacked firmness and decision. There were weak lines of irresolution about the mouth that marred its beauty to the observant reader. But Margaret had not studied faces with a view to reading character. She loved him, and the things we love are always beautiful, in spite of their defects.

On the morrow Lucia came. A tall, graceful girl with a handsome face, and easy stylish manner. She was attractive, and what was more, she was fully conscious of it. A girl evidently fond of show, and used to having her own way; selfish and exacting, and yet pleasant enough to outward appearances, when it pleased her to be.

That evening Dr. Leigh called. Lucia was in the parlor playing when he came in. She had on a dress of some airy fabric which became her well, of a soft, neutral tint. Her hair had a cluster of pink roses in it, and a cluster of buds fastened the lace at her throat. There was a sort of careless grace about her and her toilet which Dr. Leigh thought very charming as Margaret introduced them.

Margaret saw the look of admiration in his eyes and sighed. She never had time to get up these little tricks of the toilet. Life was too busy with her for that. She had few fine dresses; Lucia must have them, instead. And with the fine dresses, Lucia must have the chances for education which Margaret would have given years of her life to have possessed. It was always so. Lucia had the best of everything, and Margaret had what was left if anything. If there was nothing left she must go without.

Lucia evidently did her best to be attractive to Dr. Leigh, that evening, and succeeded. There was a vivacity about her which Margaret wholly lacked; a dash and sparkle which was rather captivating to a susceptible person. And then, she had an outside show of accomplishment which might pass for the genuine thing with a person not used to judging the article. She sang and played with considerable taste, and Margaret could do neither; and while Margaret was quiet and reserved, she was brilliant and witty and talkative.

"Do come again," she said, when Dr Leigh rose to go. "Come often, please. I expect to be dull, here, this is such a humdrum neighborhood. I shall want lots of company to keep me from getting blue."

And Dr. Leigh promised to come again, and kept his promise.

Margaret's meetings with her lover were few and far between after that. It was not long before she began to see that Lucia's attractions were winning him more and more away from her.

"Can I have nothing of my own?" she cried, bitterly. "Must my life always be made up of sacrifices, and go on like this to the end? Why can't she let me have the man I love, the man who has wooed me for his wife, without trying to win him away from me? She has had all the pleasant things of life; can't she give me one chance for happiness?"

"I don't see what Dr. Leigh could see in you to make him want to marry you," Lucia said to her one day, "you are not at all alike. He is so lively, and you are so quiet, that I should not consider you suited to each other."

"If he loved me, there is no mystery about it," answered Margaret.

"Ah, no; if he loved you, that explains it, I suppose," said Lucia. "Still I can't quite understand it. Now I'm not at all egotistical, but really think I am better suited to Dr. Leigh's tastes than you are. Dr. Leigh has seen something of the world, and so have I; and we are better fitted by education for each other's society, than you and he are. You should have had some quiet, odd person like yourself."

"Perhaps you would like to have me give up Dr. Leigh to you, since he is so well suited for you?" Margaret said, with flushed cheeks.

"Don't take the trouble to get angry," Lucia said, coolly. "If I wanted him, perhaps I should not *ask* you to give him up."

And so the summer days went by, and Margaret knew, by and by, that Lucia was doing her best to get her lover away from her. And Dr. Leigh did not seem to be opposed to it. He still had pleasant, lover words for Margaret when they chanced to be alone, but somehow she facied that his heart was not in them. She thought the band began to fret and chafe him, but he made no sign by which she could be sure of it.

One day her step-mother said to her,

"For Lucia's sake, I must ask you to do one of two things: if you are still resolved to marry Dr. Leigh, *knowing the circumstances*, I must insist on its being done at once. If you do not intend to marry him—and I should hardly suppose you would, *as the case stands* give him back his freedom and let him do as he pleases. You must have seen before this, that Lucia really likes him, and it is evident that he has a strong regard for her. As the matter stands now, you are between them and happiness. If you do not intend to let him be free to act according to his own inclinations, for Lucia's sake marry him at once, that she may not waste her affections on a man who cannot reciprocate them as he evidently would do, were he free to do so. At heart, I think Dr. Leigh fully returns the regard Lucia has for him, but he cannot say so, because he is bound to you by a promise made before he knew the state of his own mind, probably. Choose one way or the other. I ask you to do this for Lucia's sake. This suspense and uncertainty is too much for her."

Mrs. Vane had hinted of this before, but Margaret had tried to believe that Dr. Leigh still loved her; that Lucia's brilliance dazzled him, and that, by and by, he would grow tired of the sparkle and flash of her superficialities, and come back to his old allegiance.

But now it was put before her in a manner so plain that she could not hesitate to look the matter squarely in the face.

For Lucia's sake! Always that plea. It was only one more sacrifice, and what did it matter if it was the greatest she could make? She had found his love so sweet—so restful; and now she must give it up for another's sake. Give up the sweet dreams and tender hopes which had made her life bright and beautiful for a little while. It was hard to do so, but perhaps it was her duty to. She did not want him to keep his promise to her if he loved another.

That night he came. She was alone in the parlor when he came in.

"I want to talk with you," she said. "I want to know if you want your freedom back again. Yes, or no?"

"Are you getting tired of your fetters," he said lightly, yet with a swift excitement perceptible under the lightness of his words.

"Please answer my question," she said, very pale but calm. "I do not want to keep you if you want to go."

"Perhaps you have grown tired of the engagement, and want me to assume the responsibility of breaking it? Is that it?" he asked, with a little flash of anger at the unfaithfulness her words implied, though she had not intended to put such a meaning in them.

"I ask you a simple question," she answered. "I do not wish to keep you to any promises you have made, if, since making them, you have seen that you were mistaken in yourself. Here is your ring, if you want it back again, and I give you your freedom with it if you choose to take it."

"Since *you* wish it, I will take it," he said, with a curious mixture of anger and self-disgust. He knew that he had proved recreant, and yet he wanted to throw the blame upon her. He hated to have her accuse him of unfaithfulness, and he knew that he had been guilty of it. "But, remember, I did not ask you for it," he said. "This is your doing, Margaret."

She had had a faint hope all along that when it came to the final choice, he would not take the ring, but would come back to her. Now that hope was gone, and she turned away and left the room with something of that feeling at heart that comes to us when we see our dear ones die. Had she not lost the sweetest thing of life—*love*? It had died, and now it was to her but a memory.

Before a month had gone by Dr. Leigh and Lucia were engaged, and in October they were married.

After that night, when she gave him back his ring and his freedom, a change came to Margaret. She began to see Dr. Leigh in something of his true character; weak, changeable, irresolute; and she asked herself, after the first bitterness of giving up her dreams and hopes were away, if it had not happened for the best, after all. She wanted some one who would be true and faithful, steadfast and unchangeable. Was Leigh such a man? Had he the steadfastness and strength of will which she required in her husband? Perhaps not; but she *had loved him*.

It was not long before Dr. Leigh found out the true character of the wife he had married. She was like her mother, a selfish, indolent, exacting woman, without depth of character or energy of purpose; a showy ornament for the parlor, nothing more. And when her fretful fault-findings sounded in his ears, and her weak complainings wearied him, he thought of Margaret and knew what he had lost.

Years have gone by since then. Margaret is Margaret Vane still. For Dr. Leigh, as she knows him now, she has no fond and lingering love; but for the ideal lover she knew years ago, whose name was Dr. Leigh, and whom she thought true and tender and steadfast, she has has a sweet and pleasant memory. The ideal lover died and was hidden away with other dead things long ago.

For the Dr. Leigh who comes to her often now, she has a sincere friendship, because she pities him. His life is a failure. His home is a home in nothing but the name. It has not one pleasant association connected with it for him. Sitting in his study, he thinks of the pleasant hearth where Margaret lives her life alone, among her books and pictures and flowers, and thinks of "what might have been" if he had not been so blind. And looking in her sweet, peaceful eyes, and her face grown almost lovely now, since she began her new life among scenes which hold many pleasant things for her, he calls her Saint Margaret.

Ah! lost things are so sweet—so sweet!

☞ A Kentucky man set out to husk eighty bushels of corn the other day, but right in the busiest part of the task he was called off to shoot a man who had proposed elopement to his wife. He, therefore, fell short two bushels.

☞ The Titusville Press says that the meanest man in town is the one who horsewhips his wife because she won't tell him what she intends to give him for a Christmas present.

☞ Winter with its horrors is approaching, and the poor should be looked after. As we have previously suggested, a nice breast-pin can be bought for thirty cents.

☞ An ill-used husband around the Iola (Kan.) Register office makes this observation: "If Susan B. and her confreres get shut up in prison for illegal voting, we know lots of men who will urge their wives to try voting again."

☞ A boy at Denton, Md., was recently threatened with arrest by a large crowd of citizens who thought he was disturbing them. He turned and, drawing a pistol, promised general death. Everybody ran except one pugnacious party, who threw down the murderer and discovered that the pistol was a barn-door key. The crowd returned—they only went away because they had thought they heard an alarm of fire.

☞ This is from a St. Louis paper, of course:—A St. Louis gentleman took a room at a Chicago boarding-house recently, and was aroused early the following morning by the chambermaid, who remarked that, as it was near time to set the breakfast table, she would have to trouble him for the top sheet.

☞ The way they do out West when a dog shows symptoms of madness is for the crowd to chase and worry him through the streets until he is mad in dead earnest. In the course of a chase of five miles or so they manage to make him bite a dozen children and a score of other dogs. This multiplies paragraphs and brings the town into notice.

☞ William Webb, of St. Austell, England, dried twelve dinamite cartridges in a stove. His wife, two children and his father were with him when he began, but they all separated immediately after.

☞ Two boys have been expelled from a school in Brockport, N. Y., for cutting off a curl from the head of a young lady who sat in front of them at church.

☞ A man in Danbury who enjoys the most sympathy is he who chased a runaway team for half a mile, and finally succeeded in heading it off only to discover the driver in the carriage, looking very much astonished at the hallooing and panting rescuer (?)

☞ The Fairbanks, scale manufacturers, borrowed five dollars to make their first scale, and are now worth $3,000,000. Go and borrow five dollars, young man.

☞ Theodore Tilton asks: Where would I be now but for the Pilgrim Fathers?" The idea is gradually gaining ground that the whole mission of the pilgrims was to come here and "found" Theodore Tilton.

☞ A San Francisco paper remarks that all the unconvicted criminals in California are now clamoring for a Fair trial.

☞ Sidney Rigdon, who is reputed to have been the author of the Mormon Bible, and who at one time ranked next to Joe Smith in the Church of the Latter-day Saints, was stricken with paralysis last week, at his home in Alleghany county, New York.

☞ Dobbs mentions that the young poet who went about sighing for "An angel in the house," got married recently, and now he sighs more than ever.

☞ A Janesville (Wisconsin) clergyman delivered his sermon sitting down, the other Sunday, because a pet carbuncle forbade his standing up. His text was from Job.

☞ The man who fell from a telegraph pole the other day while engaged in placing a wire, is now so far convalescent that he has recovered his spirits, and wittily says that he is only suffering a little from the effects of climb it.

☞ A Georgia woman is credited with having raised a large family, although not out of her teens. It was her mother-in-law's family, and she did it with keg of gunpowder planted in the cellar.

☞ Our exchanges are considerably agitated over our Indian trouble. We are worried to death ourselves about it, although we never say anything. We prefer to let the grief eat into us—eat into us silently.—*Danbury News.*

☞ The New York Times has a long editorial attacking poor coffee. A journal base enough to assault an article so universally used is as bold as it is bad, and it would, if it could, undermine the railroad breakfast system of this country.—*Mobile Register.*

☞ Compulsory education is much better than none, but other things should be brought into harmony with it. In Texas children under fifteen are required to attend school, and in Houston a little married lady below that age is obliged to take her baby along. Now this maternal school child ought not to be a school child or ought not to be maternal, one or the other. It is inconvenient.

☞ Boston has smoking cars upon its street railways, and contemplates putting on a few hog cars for those that chews.

IN MEMORIAM.

[Lines written in memory of George W. Stout, who fell asleep in Jesus, December 30, 1872, son of George Stout, an old and respected citizen of Philadelphia, and son-in-law of the late Charles Alexander, former proprietor of The Saturday Evening Post. The deceased was a kind husband, a devoted father, a dutiful son, and an affectionate brother—all his spare moments were devoted to the interests of his children, of whom he left three—a little boy and two little girls. Quiet and unostentatious in his manner, only those intimately acquainted with him knew his worth. He was employed as bookkeeper in the firm of Burgin & Sons for twenty-one years; always at his post working for the interests of his employers, conscientious in all his dealings. He has left an irreproachable name.]

He rests in the Lord, a calm sweet repose,
Disturbed by no grief s, alarmed by no foes;
Around him the angels their vig le shall keep,
Until he awakes from that long, dreamless sleep.

He rests in the Lord, his life's work is done,
The conflict is over, the victory is won,
All his trust was in Jesus, that dear loving friend,
Who ever stood by and was true to the end.

He rests in the Lord, but his memory is dear
To the lone ones he's left in their pilgrimage here—
Of a pure gentle nature that endeared every heart,
And caused bitter sorrow when called on to part.

He rests in the Lord, but it may not be long
Ere the trumpet shall sound, and that vast countless throng
Shall from their graves in triumph arise
To hail their Redeemer descending the skies.

He rests in the Lord, how transporting the thought
That 'tis in the future with rich blessings fraught,
When loved ones shall meet on that bright, golden shore,
Where death and the grave are heard of no more.

He rests in the Lord, then dry up all tears,
And banish away all those harassing fears,
For soon shall we enter that heavenly rest
Where the faithful shall all be eternally blest.

EMMA E. ALEXANDER, Philada.

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nov5-tf

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PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

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By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "Una and Her Lions," etc.

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By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquette," etc.

A NOVELET.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story," "Rachburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

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Fine Engravings of the Fashions will represent the latest styles in Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Hats, Headdresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

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The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character, embracing pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections. These choice and e egant Engravings are a special feature of this Magazine, and should entitle it to the preference over all others.

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☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to one order.*

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THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JAN. 11, 1873.

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TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

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There is one thing to be specially observed of our Chromo—the more you look at it, the more you like it. This is the truest test of merit in a painting. A mere pretty, shallow picture you soon tire of.

A young lady writes to us, we presume it is a young lady, and pretty:—"Dear friend, I have received your beautiful Chromo; it is worth all the money that I sent you, and as much more. I think that every girl who gets this picture owes you a sweet kiss." That last remark somewhat strikes our fancy as being unusually neat and touching.

The Slangy Set.

The Slangy set amuse me. To be sure a week in a lighthouse with one of them would be a direful doom; take a dozen words and phrases from their vocabulary, and they would be as mute as fish; but they are diverting for the nonce.

At the seaside this summer I met four pretty girls, who had every probability in their favor for a long life and a merry one, but still a mortuary uncertainty seemed to be hanging over them all. Every other minute came this phrase from their rosy lips, "I shall die!" with a wondrous variety of elocutionary effect. "I shall die!"—accent on last word and rising inflection; "I shall die!"—prolonged circumflex; "I shall die!"—explosive rotund; "I shall die!"—decided falling inflection. One of them occasionally tried the interrogative form, "Won't you die?" with an indescribable air of gush and incipient idiocy. The limits for this set are from the schoolboy, who tells you if you were to hear the fellers talk you couldn't understand half they said, to the young married lady whose stock of ideas is limited. But slang is to some extent universal, and in a proper degree rather useful. Sabele de Vere says that we speak English but talk American, and I confess to a liking for some of the "rabble-charming words which carry so much wildfire wrapt up in them."—*Galaxy*

A Deaf and Dumb Marriage.

At St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, London, a deaf and dumb bridegroom was lately married to a deaf and dumb bride. The minister read the marriage service very slowly aloud, for the benefit of the congregation, and at the same time gesticulating with his fingers in the deaf and dumb alphabet for the benefit of the *silently* happy couple. The bride and bridegroom played their respective parts in the service by means of their fingers, and no real difficulty occurred save in those parts when, ordinarily, the two should join hands. A little amusement was caused by the inability of the bride to explain that a certain gentleman, put forward by those officiating, was not the chosen one, but the clergyman opportunely came to her relief. In the parts more immediately relating to the bride and the bridegroom, no knowledge of the dumb alphabet was needed, as their loving gestures were sufficient explanation.

☞ There is one lady down on rubber baubles. The slippery condition of the flagging Monday morning necessitated her sitting down with enthusiastic suddenness, and the rebound that followed drove her head through a sixty dollar show-case.—*Danbury News.*

THE INVITATION.

If I called thee, wouldst thou come,
Love, across the Northern Sea,
From thy dark and rugg'd home,
Back to Italy and me?

Here the sky is blue, intense,
Here the Arno's lingering feet
Blend, with Earth's glad affluence,
Sounds and sighs of summer sweet.

Here the fireflies wing their flight,
Pulsing to the magic rune
Murmured every breathless night
Through our warm delicious June.

Here the roses in sweet scorn
Smile above the ragged wall,
Here, wave fields of yellow corn,
Lit by poppies red and tall.

Music here from soft-voiced birds,
Wild, pathetic, eager song,
Plaintive as a lute's low chords,
Piercing as a clarion strong.

Here are vines which clasp and fold
Rude, bare boughs, with tendrils fine;
Here are fruits of orient gold,
Fountains which like rainbows shine.

Melody and fragrance here,
Opal tints on hill and plain,
Lithe green reeds with lifted spear,
Purple grapes mid ripening grain.

Beauty's fairest home is here,
Earth baptised in light and dew.
Haste, the summer draweth near!
Haste, where souls are born anew!
I have called thee, will thou come?

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

STILL HARPING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

As a rule, I'm a case-hardened old sinner. No measurable amount of scolding or nagging can make me budge a hair's breadth to the right or left of mine ancient, beaten track. Bless you, no! And, between ourselves, I don't mind a new-paper blowing up any more than my dinner. I could take two every day and never wink.

But occasionally something happens which I feel mean over for a week. If I think I have hurt the feelings of any really good, worthy person, or spoken disrespectfully of anything I really oughtn't to so speak of, or if a gentle little lady like "Roberta" blows me up, I assure you I feel like a heathen and a cannibal. I feel as if I had been pinching somebody's baby. That's how I feel this morning, since I've read "Roberta's" criticisms. I'm satisfied folks don't understand my ideas on the grand and absorbing subject of Husbands at all. If they only knew what gigantic ideas concerning Husbands roll and tumble through my brain, like Hendrick Hudson's nine-pins among the Catskill Mountains, I'm sure they wouldn't be so hard on me. With my eyes rolled up appealingly toward Heaven, I assure Roberta and the rest of creation, that it is my solemn, unfaltering belief that husbands are the noblest institution of the civilized world. But husbands who are masters are abominable. I will stand by that till I die. It's my principle. I will never desert Mr. Micawber.

Roberta is sure if I were only to meet her husband and head, I should be charmed with him at once. He isn't like the rest. He is perfection. Undoubtedly Roberta speaks the truth. He must be something past common, if as nice and pleasant a lady as Roberta shows herself to be, in the little article she wrote, is so enthusiastic over him. It would give me infinite pleasure to meet him. I would not for the world doubt or disbelieve a word she says. At the same time,—strange what wicked thoughts will come into people's heads in the wrong place,—I remember what a famous English writer, himself a husband, says:

"I wonder how it is that women do not find out their husbands to be humbugs? Nature has so provided it, and thanks to her."

But that was only something which came into my head in the wrong place. Please understand me, once for all: Women can't do without men, because God made 'em to go together through this world. Moreover, a woman who staves around and tries to make a man of herself, is only less disagreeable than a roaring old despot of a head of a family. God would have made 'em all men in the first place, if he had wanted 'em all men.

And a nice mess they would make of it, if there were none but men in this world.

Nevertheless, because man is man and woman is woman, that is no reason on earth why one should be a ruler over the other. Man has a stronger arm, and more knowledge in some directions than a woman, but I think the fruitiest, crossest-grained old fogy in the universe will hardly deny that there are several things which a woman knows more about in this world than a man. So it's just as much half a dozen on one side as it is on the other. But women ought to have dignity, self respect, and force of character enough to manage their own exclusive concerns. If they haven't so much force in them by nature, they ought to try by all possible means to put some there. It may be all very pleasant to run like a whimpering baby into a man's arms, and pour a volley of petty domestic complaints into his much-enduring and long-suffering ear, but I hardly believe a man will think any more of his wife for it, and the woman who does it is guilty of a grievous wrong, both to herself and her children. Doesn't it sound pretty now, for instance, to hear a woman begging her husband to help her enforce her authority with the kitchen-gal and chambermaid? And for a specimen of a noble, dignified mother, how does it strike your fancy to hear a woman scream to a pack of unruly children:—

"Never mind! I'll tell yer father on you when he comes home. He'll make you stand 'round!"

How much respect will the children of that silly idiot have for their mother, do you think? I tell you what a woman needs is to be more self-reliant. She won't be any too wise then, even with all the help of her strong, manly husband. A writer somewhere, lately, has been saying that some women are unfit for wifehood and motherhood because of *talents* which made them different from their sex. I never heard the like o' that in my life. The idea of talents unfitting anybody for anything! So far as I've observed, it's downright stupidity which unfits women for wives and mothers, more than anything else. Talents are just exactly what they need, and the more of 'em the better. The thought of a woman's being too bright to be anybody's mother! Did you ever hear of such preposterous nonsense?

A husband and wife ought to help each other, love each other, trust each other, and counsel together always; but as divinely made equals, standing side by side, equally yoked in the eyes of God and man.

And by your leave that's the last time I'm going to mention the word husband till the millennium, when there won't be any husbands.

ZIG.

If Congress were but kinder,
'Twould banish from our ground
The italian organ-grinder
Who carries the monkey round.

For it makes me feel quite funky
When you think, d Darwin's true,
That you might have been the monkey—
And the monkey might have been you!

☞ A Danbury man who was trying to shelter himself in a doorway from the rain of Sunday, had the mournful pleasure of seeing five of his umbrellas go by.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY OLIVE KING.

DEAR POST—We have it at last. I refer to the sleighing. There was a tempest abroad in the land yesterday composed of snow, hail and sleet, but principally *snow*; but to-day it is clear and still, and though the atmosphere is none of the mildest, "the town is alive and its heart is aglow," and the gay sledges are flashing by like meteors, while the merry jingle, jingle of the bells and the bursts of wild laughter float out on the crisp, frosty air. But nobody minds the cold when comfortably tucked in furs with some one who is not only very near, but considerably dear—at any price, I was about to add, but guess I won't. And then to "scoot" down the boulevard all along with hundreds of other "scooters," each and every one fully confident that they have it in their power to travel right ahead of anything else on the road. Well, the pastime is exhilarating, to say the least of it.

To be sure, many might argue, and probably do, that we have no right to array ourselves in furry robes and go out and enjoy ourselves, while so many poor creatures are shivering with cold and are wretched and miserable. But then sitting in the house and thinking about it won't benefit them much more as I can see; and a snow storm after all isn't half as bad as a bitter cold day with a northeaster sharp enough to cut to the bone, every blast. And yet the poor and houseless do not get one half the sympathy then that they do when the thermometer gets up to snowing point. But any time their lines are hard enough, and God pity them and soften the hearts of men.

Jingle! jingle! jingle! How can one moralize and be real good when so much mirth and hilarity is before him or *her*.

I have heard it suggested by one who thinks a great deal of his comfort, that with the snow and the dampness, and the cold and the snow balls that occasionally don't hit where the urchins intend, and are occasionally intended to hit where they have no business to, it would be much pleasanter and more enjoyable to play sleigh-ride in a nice, cosey room along side a grate-fire, taking in of course, all the perquisites that are supposed to belong to the gentlemen. It might be pleasant, but such an effort of fancy would be required to connect such an arrangement with the cold comfort of a dash over the frozen crystals, that I very much fear the illusion would not be forthcoming.

The fellow who proposed to play sleigh-ride by sitting in a cold hall in his night-shirt with his feet in a pail of ice water, while his wife stood at his elbow and jingled the tea-bell, would have a much more realizing sense of what this species of amusement is like, I imagine.

But in looking out on the avenue to-day what an opportunity is presented for comment and speculation.

I have read somewhere that woman, frail and delicate and feeble and weak as she is supposed to be, and as she has an ambition to think herself, is possessed of most remarkable powers of endurance.

A physician, high in his calling, declares that to take an ox and bind him up in corsets and things, as ladies are fixed up fifteen hours out of the twenty-four, and he would die within three weeks. I don't know how he came by his knowledge, but possibly he may have been a butcher sometime and have done his killing that way. If so, he has been promoted, I suppose, and feels above killing oxen now. Still, if he speaks truth, it shows beyond peradventure that in point of endurance the ladies "beat all the horned cattle," for they do stand corsets and endure to a good old age, and find themselves not infrequently great grandmothers—so there is, in fact, a foundation for his belief. I think myself they can stand an immense amount of squeezing, but it is nothing after all to their power of withstanding *cold*. Gentlemen bundle up these days in big fur-lined overcoats, with no end of flannels and undercoats and vests and Cardigan jackets and seal-skin caps drawn down tightly over their ears, and great scarfs of finest Thibet to keep their chins warm, and great miracles of waterproof overshoes to protect their feet; while the contented little being alongside of all this comfort, has a jaunty little hat on top of her head, with long white feather, and bright flowers and gay ribbons that look very fresh and pretty, but are not a great success so far as warmth is concerned. She probably has an elegant velvet cloak, too, with a narrow border of fur around the edge that does not add very much to its comfort. Also, she wears a boa around her throat, and has a tiny muff in which to encase her little hands, while her feet are quite comfortable in a lisle thread stocking and boot of finest French kid. Aside from these wrappings I have mentioned, she wears only her ordinary house clothes—and she isn't cold one bit. Perhaps the raiment don't have much to do with it. I've been told that it was all in the way one uses one's self.

They have "clouds" this season, I quite forgot those, and they look like a move in the right direction—if any one knows how that looks. They are of fine Shetland wool, pure white, and when put over the hat and tied down around the ears, and wound two or three times about the neck, and the end thrown over the face for a veil, they are as comfortable a fashion as we have ever had; besides, they are picturesque, and remind one of the Spanish women, though why they should I'm sure I can't tell, as very few of us have ever seen any. Perhaps, come to think of it, it is the Turkish women we are reminded of.

And that suggestion brings to my recollection a long argument I had the other day with an eccentric fillibuster, on costumes—*ladies'* costumes, of course. He was not in favor of trained skirts; thought them ungraceful for the house or street. He didn't like drapery of any kind. Bustles, and corsets, and hoops were an abomination also; and so were the thousand and one other things with which ladies burden themselves. Having progressed thus far in the conversation, I began to get frightened, did not know but he was going back to first principles, and was about to advocate the dress of Eden as being most classic as well as graceful, but just as I was about to beat a retreat, he burst out with something about the *Turkish* costume being the only correct thing. Now, in my opinion, there is but one thing worse than a Turkish costume, and that is a Turkish bath. In fact I've got a prejudice against everything pertaining to Turkey. Don't even care about it on Thanksgiving day; the white meat does very well, but "a little of that goes a great way," as the boy said when his father was whipping him. But I'm always ready to hear an opinion, and if I can be shown that my impressions are erroneous I am always ready to give in, so with a smile "that was childlike and bland," I presume, I resumed my seat and respectfully said Yes! with the rising inflection.

I was sorry I did afterwards, for when that fellow commences to talk there is no guessing when he will stop, and ladies' costumes, next to ladies, is his pet subject. For three mortal hours he enlarged on Turkish trousers, and little embroidered shirt fronts, and black velvet spencers, and declared emphatically that woman would never be truly beautiful and fairly comfortable until she adopted that dress. He said he had seen a plain lady transformed into an angel of beauty by that costume, and he wondered that there was not independence enough in this country to establish it.

To my certain knowledge this fellow has never been out of the United States, barring two or three trips to New Jersey, and I was sorely puzzled to think where he could possibly have seen the grand transformation of which he spoke, and finally I came to the conclusion that he must be infatuated with some female woman whose vocation is the "mimic stage," and whose last appearance was probably in the character of the Queen of the Harem or the Sultan's favorite.

He said his admiration for the dress verged on idolatry, and he thought if all we scribblers for the press would write it up, and explain its merits, it might some time become the dress of American ladies. I've no doubt it has its fine points, and so has a dromedary, for that matter—but as he wished me to mention it, I couldn't very well refuse, though I haven't any idea that it will be the means of bringing out many of them much before Lent.

LET US ALONE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GLEN CAROL.

If people only would or could know when to leave other people alone! There are moments, hours, nay whole days, in the existence of most of us, when smiles, or even half-way pleasant words are at a discount—when we cannot look or feel pleased with anything in nature, and nothing do we crave but solitude, precious above all jewels for the time being. Within the quiet of our own chamber will we battle with the demon of unrest, and presently vanquish him; but let not the gaping crowd—no, nor our dearest friends—behold either struggle or victory. We are ready to cry, as did the Lotus-eaters: "Let us alone. What is it that will last?"

Surely not these morbid feelings of self-distrust—this half wishing our friends might turn to foes, that we might conscientiously subject them to at least a mental chastisement—this awful hungriness of heart—this blind, desperate reaching out of fettered hands toward the unattainable. It is well to wage war against the evil angel who storms the castle of our heart, and entering, fills it with thoughts like these. But it must be a fair encounter, hand to hand, and no witnesses. We do not care to have our every look and action watched and criticized while the combat is going on.

Curious eyes cannot decide as to who is victor half so well or fairly as can we. We know, Mrs. Pry, that you found it a great source of self-gratulation when you surprised us one unfortunate day—shortly after the enemy had taken possession, and before we had time to retreat to the stronghold of our own room—with head bowed dejectedly, a suspicion of tears visible, and a general woe-begone expression of countenance. We felt very slightly ashamed—we confess it—and very greatly exasperated. It is bad enough, the fates know, to be in such an unpleasant frame of mind; but to be discovered while we are floundering in a sea of misery, and with its briny drops still washing our cheek—pounced upon, and remorselessly dragged to shore, sympathized with, and exhorted to "cheer up," told that "we all have our troubles," (as if that were anything new!) and entreated to go out for a walk when we feel in the least despondent—this is indeed a "sorrow's crown of sorrow." Is it in human nature to smile under the circumstances? Perhaps. Dear friends and enemies, when our "blue" days overtake us, let us alone, we beseech you—let us alone!

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

I.

It was not a word!
It was only a look!
From your eyes true and clear
As the wild mountain brook!
A look of such love,
Of such ownership, too!
I forgot there was any one living but you!

II.

None saw it but me!
But it beamed from your eyes,
Swift, sweet, into mine,
Like an Alpine sunrise;
With strange, trembling joy,
Was my heart thrilled all through,
As it struggled in vain 'gainst the rapture so new!

III.

It was not a word!
It was only a look!
But easy to read
As a printed book!
So tender, so mastering,
Without tone or tone,
It caught me. It held me,
And made me her own. L.

—*Old and New.*

Deborah Davenport's Will.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Deborah Davenport, some months ago, was laid to rest beneath the clods of her native valley. On the marble tablet above her is carved this inscription: "She rests in peace."

In peace! I am glad of it! I sincerely rejoice at it, for it is infinitely better than can be said of her miserable survivors. Deborah Davenport, inspired by the glorious example of so many of the "illustrious dead," did bequeath unto certain charitable institutions the carefully gathered treasures of her seventy years, to the utter exclusion of her near relatives, who, being in circumstances exceedingly straitened, would have been greatly blessed by a small portion of her golden treasure.

Thereupon arose from the acquaintances of the "departed sister" a cry of execration. The last will and testament of that worthy personage was stigmatized as unjust in the extreme. Verily, it was not the fault of her friends that Deborah Davenport "rested in peace."

Unhappy art thou, O Deborah, if the "gates" are "ajar" for thee, that thou shouldst be cognizant of the judgment passed upon thee by thine own familiar friends.

It cannot perhaps be denied that amidst the praises which this *charitable* bequest received from the distant public, there *might* have been heard a sound like unto the "tinkling cymbal" spoken of by a saintly man of old.

I, too, it must be confessed, sympathized with those to whom it seemed that injustice had been done, and was filled with righteous indignation toward the author of this unhappy will,—but O, shades of my ancestors, is that any just reason that in every house I enter in Gossipville, the sole, absorbing topic of conversation should be "Deborah Davenport's will?"

Nay, is it any reason that this topic should pursue me even to the recesses of my boarding-house; meet me at the table, on the stairs?

Deborah, Deborah! thou makest me cry out for a new beatitude; "Blessed be he who of silver and gold hath none, that he may die will-less, and his rest be unbroken."

Oh, worn-out topics of conversation! Ye are ghostly phantoms that make us long and cry for the millennium.

The evils that must needs be under the sun we will bear with fortitude, but what need is there in this age for worn-out conversational topics?

Are there no new theories in science; no wonderful changes in the history of the nations?

Are there no pictures; no exquisite poems born of master minds, that with refining influence, lift us up into a purer atmosphere? May we not talk of *these* things? F. A. E.

An Angry Woman's Words.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

DEAR POST.—I am *mad!* just think of it, a woman in anger addressing *you*. But I want to tell you what I am mad at. My lord and *not* master thinks we can't afford to take *you* in our family another year, just think of it; can't take THE POST; but then he can show *from ten to twenty dollars'* worth of tobacco, and at the end of the year have nothing to show for it but marked up floors and a scolding wife if you please. I *will* have THE POST, there now, and you *shall* have the stamps. I want to see your sunny face every week for the next year to come. Besides the pleasure and useful information I gain by studying your columns, the papers are worth more than three dollars a year to me, to paste up on the wall and lay on shelves. Now I know ladies who would like to have THE POST but cannot afford it, they dress well and live well, and their husbands use tobacco all the time, and if you *dare* ask the latter to take a paper or magazine, you are treated to a smile of contempt, and perhaps told that they are afraid their wives will not have time to patch their *shirts*, and that proves they think their wives fit only to patch their old *duds*. I do think women should have their rights in their own home-circle, and let the men do their own political talking and voting at present anyhow, and if this appears in your columns I will be satisfied.

GOBLEARY.

[We came to the conclusion, as we gazed with an editor's pensive eye upon the notes which fell out with the above letter, that the brave and sensible woman who speaks therein had finally had her way. Certainly among the "rights of women," that of having a good weekly paper is one of the most undeniable.]

MY LOVE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

What is my darling like? Her eyes
Are blue as Summer's deepest skies,
Or as an April violet
Upspringing in some meadow wet.

Her cheeks have caught the sunset's glow;
Her brow is white as driven snow;
Sweeter than soft winds from the South
Are kisses from her perfect mouth.

Her hair! You've seen the yellow stain
That marks the ripening Summer grain,
And dearer is each tress to me
Than brightest gems of land or sea.

Her voice! A shy brown thrush that sang
Till all the wood with music rang,
Once paused, abashed, at her sweet tone—
The dullest sound surpassed his own.

And do I love her? What to me
Without my Clara, would Heaven be?
The forest wild, the desert bare
Would fairer seem, if she were there.

Shall you and I, my life, my sweet,
Together walk the golden street,
In that fair, promised world above,
Drink in eternal youth and love?

OUR BABY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY M. A. DOUGLASS.

Our baby is seven years old, not quite a baby you see, but then he's all we have! He has any number of names,—Treasure, Darling, Tease and Torment and the like, but the one that seems a *part* of the young gentleman is Tot. Just at present Tot is lying in the sun, his tiny boots higher than his head—"studying" It goes somewhat in this wise—"F-o-l-fol—l-y-ly, folly (definition)—frailty—(Oh, *such* a long icicle)—weakness. F-o-r-for—t-r-e-s-s-tress, fortress—(Aunt Meg, I believe I'd study harder in your lap!)—a strong place. What river—(shoo-fly!)—empties into the—(a deep yawn)—the Gulf—(Aunt Meg, what makes your pen crackle?)—the Gulf of—("How much do *frink* you'll write?" "*Think*, not *frink*, Tot." "Yes'm, *frink*")—the Gulf of Mexico? The—(insinuatingly—"Do you s'pose it's the Del'war, Auntie?")

By and by a sudden silence falls upon the room. In surprise I stop writing to glance at Tot; then I cease to wonder, for he is asleep. The red lips are just parted enough to let the little seed pearl teeth gleam through. The thick lashes cover the laughing gray eyes, and the chubby hands grasp the little battered "Geography." As I look I say fervently, "If he'll *only* sleep until I finish this translation!" But adieu, vain hope! even as I speak the black lashes sweep back, the eyes look into mine, and the baby voice says coaxingly—

"Do you s'pose it's the Del'war, Aunt Meg?"

Light and the Complexion.

The action of light on the human skin is manifest. It browns and tans the teguments, by calling out the production of the coloring-matters they contain. The parts of the body usually bare, as the skin of the face and hands, are darker than others. In the same region, country people are more tanned than town residents. In latitudes not far apart, the inhabitants of the same country vary in complexion in a measure perceptibly related to the intensity of solar light. In Europe three varieties of color in the skin are distinctly marked: olive-brown, with black hair, beard and eyes; chestnut, with tawny beard and bluish eyes; blond, with fair, light beard and sky-blue eyes. White skins show more readily alterations occasioned by light and heat; but, though less striking, facts of variation in color are observable in others. The Scytho-Arabic race has but half its representatives in Europe and Central Asia, while the remainder passes down to the Indian Ocean, continuing to show the gradual rising heat of climate by deepening brown complexions. The Himalayan Hindoos are almost white; those of the Deccan, of Coromandel, Malabar, and Ceylon, are darker than some negro tribes. The Arabs, olive and almost fair in Armenia and Syria, are deep brown in Yemen and Muscat. The Egyptians, as we go from the mouths of the Nile up-stream toward its source, present an ascending chromatic scale, from white to black; and the same is true of the Tuariks on the southern side of Mount Atlas, who are only light-olive, while their brethren in the interior of Africa are black.

The ancient monuments of Egypt show us a fact equally significant. The men are always depicted a reddish brown; they lived in the open air, while the women, kept shut up, have a pale-yellow complexion. Barrow asserts that the Mantchoo Tartars have grown whiter during their abode in China. Remusat, Pallas and Gutzlaff speak of the Chinese women as remarkable for a European fairness. The Jewesses of Cairo or Syria, always hidden under veils or in their houses, have a pallid, dead color. In the yellow races of the Sumatra Sound and the Maldives the women, always covered up, are pale, like wax. We know, too, that the Esquimaux bleach during their long winter. These phenomena, no doubt, are the results of several influences acting at once, and light does not play the sole part in them. Heat and other conditions of the medium probably have a share in these operations of color. Still, the peculiar and powerful effect of luminous radiation as a part of them is beyond dispute.

☞ It is suggested that the name of Barnum's Museum should be changed to Barnum's Museum.

PERSONAL.

Nilsson says she is going to bring her dear Augustas to this country.

Connoisseurs pronounce the Empress of Austria the most beautiful woman in Europe.

Mr. Froude observed to an interviewer, "I pronounce the ou in my name like oo in fool." The inter man thought F. might perhaps mean to be personal; but he did'nt say so.

A drivelling itemizer, who ought to be ashamed of himself, says Kellogg weighs 160 pounds before dinner. Don't see how he found out.

An American belle abroad is reported to have accepted the hand and heart of Bismarck's son.

Florence, the actor, says there is an abbey in Ireland where they show two skulls of Shakspeare—one when he was a little boy, and one when he was a man.

Poole, the famous London tailor, who does all the pantaloon cutting for young aristocrats, has made a fortune of $2,500,000. He says he's going to retire from business.

It is one of Rubenstein's eccentricities that he will not play at a concert where Strauss' waltzes are on the programme.

Rousseau said that no woman with fine teeth could be ugly, and the talented Frenchman considered himself a connoisseur of female beauty.

An Indianapolis writer is firm in his belief that Rubinstein has but few equals on the lecture platform. We presume this gentleman was delighted with Rubinstein's lecture upon A flat.

A Troy, New York, man, in dying, left $10,000 to a girl he had jilted.

Mr. Cobb recently married Miss Webb. He knew that they were meant to be joined as soon as he spied her.

Miss Partington writes to her aunt that the bridal wave which the papers talk so much about, has not touched that town for six years.

Rubinstein's mother teaches music in Moscow.

Stanley has had a canal-boat and a baby named for him. The baby whimpers,

"And, Stanley, is the cry!"

This of Mr. Greeley: A young autograph hunter and a poor penman withal, residing in Central New York, wrote to Mr. G. some years ago, requesting his autograph, and received by return mail his own letter with the following indorsement: "It gives me great pleasure to comply with the wish of a young man who writes worse than I do.—*H. Greeley.*"

Verdi, whose music all the young ladies are so "passionately fond of," contemplates a visit to this country, to lead in the presentation of his own operas.

IN TWENTY YEARS.

In twenty years, ah! twenty years,
Be calm, be brave, bid back thy tears;
These cankering cares, consuming fears,
Will cease to vex in twenty years;
In twenty years, ah! twenty years,
In loss, perhaps, than twenty years.

Where are the bitter grief and woe
That thine were in the long ago?
Their memory dim and vague appears
As will dimmer seem in twenty years;
In twenty years, ah! twenty years,
In less, perhaps, than twenty years.

The tongue that stung with envenomed word,
No more in love or hate is stirred;
And hands that once almost polsen shed,
May powerless lie on pulseless breast;
In twenty years, ah! twenty years,
In less, perhaps, than twenty years.

Wouldst learn the happiest way to live
Thy life forget, thy wrongs forgive?
Think on them as will one day soon
Thy whole of life, a checker'd dream;
In twenty years, ah! twenty years,
In less, perhaps, than twenty years.

Our Father's home hath "no more sea,"
There mansions fair is waiting thee;
Thy barque o'er now the bright shore nears,
It moored may be in twenty years;
In twenty years, ah! twenty years,
In less, perhaps, than twenty years.

Fireproof Buildings.

Hiram Powers, the sculptor, writes to The Evening Post, giving his views concerning fireproof structures. It must be premised that Mr. Powers draws his conclusions from the buildings in Florence, Italy, from which city he writes. He sums up as follows:—

"Therefore, to be fireproof in our own buildings, our neighbors' houses must also be fireproof; and this calls for municipal laws, regulating the material and the construction of buildings, and what should be required.

"First—The abandonment of all wood floors.

"Second—The floors to be made of bricks, thus sealing down all ventilation in case of fire.

"Third—The stairs to be metallic, or of stone.

"Fourth—The rafters of the roof, like the joists of the floors, to be all bricked over before putting on the slates or tiles.

"But (it may be asked) will not joists and rafters take fire?

"Yes, they will, and often do take fire here in Florence. But with a floor of bricks laid with mortar upon them, the Fire Department need not hurry to such a fire; hours, indeed, might elapse before they reached it. I have known an instance of nearly two days' burning of the end of a joist, just under a fire-place, and yet the beam was not burned off, only deeply charred. The fire cannot get through the bricks, but it would soon find its way through a wood floor, and then with ventilation it would soon reach the garret. In short, the whole building would be in flames within half an hour. Brick floors do not prevent fires, but they prevent conflagrations. No city can be burnt with brick floors, nor has a house been burnt within the city of Florence during my residence here of 35 years."

To our people, who build or live unconcernedly in houses filled with inflammable materials, the extreme precautions adopted against fire by the Florentines may seem absurd to the last degree. It is very evident that we are so far from anything like a tolerably safe system of building, that we must be forced up to adopting better methods by slow degrees. The time may come when we shall build as they do in Florence; but we must first pass through an unbridled tinder-box period.

A ROCKY MOUNTAIN correspondent says—"These stages are towed by six horses, steered by the most elegant young gentleman ever seen, whose cheeks always glow with the blush of youth and innocence, and whose eyes are always on the alert for holes in the road instead of the young ladies in the stage. Some portions of the road are along hill-sides, and the precipice below is very frightful to many women's nerves, and they turn pale and gasp out:—'Oh! driver, do be careful!' and the like; but he goes on his winding way. One lady asked the driver what he would do if the stage went down the bank? 'Roll down,' said he. 'Do you ever have any accident on this road?' said she. 'Sometimes, but not often,' was the reply. 'What do the people say that get hurt?' 'Nothing, for we knock them in the head at once,' was the answer, which did not at all reassure the lady."

☞ A few days ago a letter was found in an up town lamp-post box, directed in a fair female hand to "Mister Santer Klorn."

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AT THE HELM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARIE S. LADD.

The flames forked round, the ship was doomed,
But it was near to land
That might be reached could there be found
A sailor who would stand
As if upon his funeral pyre
And work with steady hand.

The captain shouted through the din—
"John Maynard can you guide
The burning ship in safety in?"
"I'll try," John Maynard cried.

And though the fire with forked tongues
Would seem the sailor to o'erwhelm,
Silent those sweeping flames among,
John Maynard still stood at the helm.

The ship is in, they hurrying pass
From off the hull it seems to be—
And all are saved, save one, alas!
Who saved them all—but he,
John Maynard, now a blackened mass,
Falls forward in the sea.

WERTZAL THE SCOUT;

OR,

The Phantom of the Black Hills.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON THE PLAINS.

The clouds broke away without a storm in the morning, and the different members composing the projected expedition were astir, and gathering up the train.

"Boys," began Wertzal, in a wild harangue, looking with his one fiery eye, over the motley group, "It strikes me that these young bloods who fur sport, recreation or sight seein' are here to fill this ere quota better think agin. It's a long ways, hard fur boots," looking askance at some rather stylish appendages upon the young fellows' feet, "an' the soulp is sech a duced loose an' slippery piece of skin, that likely's not in the course or tradin', ye'll be obliged to swap it off and wear yer skull bare-footed."

But the spruce young fort officers, newly risen to position, and having an itching ear for fame, mildly and lightly returned Wertzal's joking words; and became so jubilant during their first day's careering about the heavy train, with their new uniforms setting off their trim figures advantageously, that they rather criticised the old veteran's grammar.

"Grammar's well enough boardin' on the Alleganies, boys, but it ain't reverenced about the Rosaries. I've heard sum, at about eddycation an' so on—way in the misty past—I hev looked in a spellin'-book, but I hankered fur the dare-devil life ov the scout, an' I took my diplomy in my right eye-ball; an' I kan promise ye that the Komanches's will larn ye how ter make er *dash*."

The young fellows found food for merriment in Wertzal's dry humor, and probably never dreamed of the dangers which they were to encounter, and the death that many were to die ere their return.

Before the end of the second day they were fairly launched on the grassy sea.

The level and monotonous plain was silent as if just created and untenanted, only occasional herds of buffalo crossing the range of vision. Clumps of a sort of sage brush lay in the distance, and ominous flocks of buzzards circled sluggishly near the earth, showing where man or beast had been overtaken by disaster or death.

On the morning of the fourth day—a day rising resplendently over the "American Desert"—the whole party were in excellent spirits, and after partaking of a hearty breakfast of venison moved forward at a good pace.

Brooks and Crooker, the principal partners of the expedition, were animatedly conversing of future projects, when a scout rode up and reported a drove of wild horses careering to the southwest, and proposed that a few of the party, among which were experienced hands, should endeavor to steal up and lasso a colt or two.

"Nonsense, boys," said an old hunter, "there isn't shelter enough to allow of your approaching sufficiently near to think of throwing the lariat."

"Oh," returned the young scout who had discovered the drove, "they were not moving rapidly, and seemed swinging gradually this way."

"Eh!" uttered Wertzal, "Bretto, let's ride onto yonder rise, behind the chapperal like, an' reckonoitre."

To the motion of one of the young officers to catch a glimpse of the wonderful droves of wild Texas horses by following with the scouts, Bretto returned—

"Wait a bit, Corporal Mills, we'll be a little in advance, and as you move up we'll call out to you."

From the elevation the two men scanned the moving drove. "That means something, Wertz; what's taken them animals this way?"

The old veteran hailed the approaching train.

"Hug that hollow, men—*halt!* I ain't easy about yer ruin' this knoll jest yet—ye'll scare these hosses—leastwise, halt the train, an' close up ahind this ere belt of chapperel." The train was promptly stopped, and many of the men came cautiously up to where the scouts stood.

"I don't like the spec'acle," again affirmed Bretto. "Wertzal, what's yer mind?"

Wertzal made no reply, but bending forward with his one eye fixed with fiery intensity upon the objects under notice, he held his position until Bretto began losing patience. Every one by their silent attention showed how weightily Wertzal's opinion would balance with them.

"Bretto," exclaimed he at length, "them's Komanches."

A smothered ejaculation met the announcement.

"Way, there's not a person visible," indignantly exclaimed a young officer. "Wertzal, there positively isn't an Indian in sight."

"I ain't a gwine to dispute yer—there ain't an Injin in sight, sure's yer born; but a bit back ov them beast's shoulders ther's a leetle speck ov nothin' as ain't a natural growth on the animals' spine. Now that they walk ther's a peculiar movement, a squirm, a sort of wormy crawl of the backs ov the animals as wouldn't be seen war they light loaded. Ther's a danglin' loop ov Injin meat on the off-side ov every horse."

"But they may not have espied us," remarked Mr. Brooks. "Do you think they have, Wertzal?"

"They've diskivered suthin' mighty interestin', sum problem of natur, wich they're studyin' in ther onlimitable manner of pitch-wig down and breeches up. It may be sum other squad ov people that they're sighted, but most likely it's us. Moreover, it is a proberble conclusion to draw, that ther'll hev to be a smart swoppin' ov axidents before Mr. Brooks's and Crooker's caravanceesary gets on to Fe."

"Who would surmise," exclaimed Mr. Brooks, "that those were other than a drove of peaceably-disposed animals, crossing to some new grazing ground?"

"Verily, appearances is deceiteful—leastwise, a fellar that's squatted about these ere flats much, hes come to that conclusion."

"Is it best to move forward?"

"Not yet—hug close to the hollow. Peradventur yer not yit diskivered—they're goin' off, likely enough to throw us off our guard. We must be cautious."

"They wouldn't move off if they had seen our train—such a large party as there is of them?"

"Yer heven't the least idee, Mr. Crooker, ov what's in ther heads, save the onalienable vermin. We can't be expected to know ther biz so well as they know it, but ther's one thing undieputably sartain, if they hain't seen us, ther's sum other danger or surprise layin' on this direct pint of the compasses."

"Why so?"

"Don't yer purceive they're looped on the off or nou'west side of the animals, showin' that they wish to evade observation on the east an' nor'east quarter, that being our latitude."

The argument was conclusive, and although the war-party seemed jogging innocently and peacefully away, the guides felt it to be better to keep a sharp look-out, not only for the danger which they had seen, but for that which they had not seen.

They pushed forward as rapidly as possible, hoping to come up with a good camping ground before nightfall. For the purpose of securing a desirable location they swung far out of their direct course, but at sunset found themselves miles away from the belt of stunted bush which they had hoped to reach.

"It would be my advice to get on to that belt," said Wertzal to the partners of the expedition.

"How far away do you think it is?"

"Six or seven miles."

Mr. Brooks demurred, and Mr. Crooker coincided with him. They had had a hard day's ride, with an intense heat pouring down upon them. The animals and themselves were badly blown, and where they had already halted was a pleasant spot; they really were not apprehensive of danger, and felt a disinclination to start up the train again that night.

After speaking of the matter in this light, they asked the veteran guide if he really thought the Indians, seen or unseen, meditated an attack.

"I wouldn't make a bet anyhow," replied Wertzal, "for as I've often stated, these black-an'-tan terriers ov the perarie air practical jokers, an' air aussid likely to turn up trumps an' show the winnin' hand afore ye know the game's begun. I'm one agin the memny—bein' a decided minority—but I'd like to gain the small shelter ov yonder bush afore its otherwise okkipied."

The partners, however, were disinclined to move, and were sufficiently reckless to kindle a roasting fire, over which they prepared the evening meal.

But after appetite was appeased, and the stealthy shadows began their silent march in over the grassy flats, some slumbering premonitions awoke within their minds, and they proposed tackling up and moving on to the bush.

Wertzal and Bretto, from their longer and more thorough experience on the frontier, had their doubts of the benefits of the plan, but in their subordinate position they could only advise, and afterwards do as they were bidden.

The liberated animals came unwillingly into harness again, and considerable time was consumed before the heavy train was once more in motion. The night above was cloudless and of starry splendor, but under foot, and on the level of the human eye, it was dark with shadows that hugged closely to earth.

But little was said, only the necessary orders passing back from the van riders of the train, and the occasional "ker-whack" of the drivers' whips. Seemingly to this party, "Brooks and Crooker's" caravan was the only movable thing upon the vast and trackless waste.

The scouts, without even allowing a bridle-buckle to click, and with their feet pressed firmly within the stirrups, in front and rear and on either flank, with straining eyes piercing the dun shades about them, moved forward noiseless as ghostly statues.

Everything—the whole country round about—apparently lay asleep, with the monotonous purr and drone of insects in its drowsy ear.

The slight creak and rattle of the wagon wheels of the moving train jarred painfully upon the ears of the guides.

"If we'd moved on here without haltin'," muttered Wertzal, reining up close to Bretto, "it would av done well enough, but—"

He did not finish the sentence, knowing that his companion sympathized with his feelings.

By and by they approached the desired locality—the fringe of bush upon the edge of a shallow ravine that guided the course of a stream in the seasons of rain, a stream whose bed seldom parched even in the dryest weather.

Suddenly and silently Wertzal drew upon his companion's rein.

"Do you diskiver anything wrong?" he whispered; "does my one eye play tricks, or did the line of bush crawl in a leetle from the edge?"

For an instant only did the two scouts remain motionless, watchful, listening; then came a terrible, thrilling shout from the one-eyed hero.

CHAPTER XIX.

AMBUSH.

"Halt the train! Close up, stragglers!—ambush!—Injins!" and wheeling their horses the scouts dashed back to their place in the van of the train, while a deafening yell burst from the fringe of the bush, and ricochetted through the startled air.

Then a silence, during which time Wertzal, standing as a block of breastwork before the huddled up and horrified tourists and new-fledged officers, could not resist sending among them a shaft of that irrepressible humor, that doubtless would give impulse to his last breath.

"Boys, now's a chance to try the efficasury of grammar; if that missile is at discount, finger the triggers of yer muskits lively—there's work ahead."

His last words were drowned in a diabolical whoop, accompanied by a rain of arrows and a scattering volley of bullets. The fire was returned with interest, but was not effective, as the assailants still clung to the cover of the furze.

"Fire away, boys, and cover the retreat of the train," called out Bretto, and the drivers swung the heavy wagons around as rapidly as the terrified condition of the mules and horses would allow; but two hundred yards away from the place of ambush, and a huge half circle of dusky fiends sprang up as it seemed from the bowels of the earth, and the brave party was doomed. What could a company of forty men, however valorous, accomplish, hemmed in by over two hundred warriors, who closed about them from every side and made escape impossible? The wily and cowardly foe, ambushed in front, had sent half their party to swing up from the right and left, and close in at the rear, cutting off all chances of retreat.

What could they do? They fought hand to hand, preferring death to captivity and torture from the savages. A very few sought to effect their own safety by flight, but only met a speedy dissolution in a hand-to-hand struggle with some herculean fiend.

When to load and fire his rifle became an impossible feat with Wertzal, he caught his hatchet from his belt and gave blow for blow.

More than half a score of red demons got their passports to their "happy hunting-grounds," from the Samson arm of the one-eyed scout. But nerved as he was by triple strength in battle, on bearing among the blotched and hideous assailants a white man's oath, it was written that he must go down with the dead and dying.

In the frantic plunges of the frightened, wounded, and infuriated horses, two of the wagons had collided in such a manner as to break the axles and end them up in an inextricable embrace. Under these stumbled Wertzal, sorely wounded, receiving a chance blow from a struggling horse's hoof, that rent more sparks before his eyes than ever flew up from a blacksmith's forge, and allowed the filling up of many a horrible niche in the programme to pass without his knowledge. That he was not instantly killed by the dropping down of the broken wagons, or by the trampling beasts, is proof that the end of time had not yet come with him.

His eye opened with the early dawn upon a wild and festive—if you please—carnival. It was evident that many of the goods had already been disposed of, and a large part of the braves had gone, probably to their different villages.

About fifty remained, and the partly disemboweled wagons were now being thoroughly gutted. Webs of gay-colored fabrics were being strung upon the ground amid a perfect hurricane of grunts. Ribbons and tassels were being tied in showy places about the Indians' beasts, while a small number of chiefs, bravely uplifted from such trifling pastimes, had discovered a keg of whisky, around which they were squatted, and which they were guzzling with strangled exclamations of fiery satisfaction.

But for the sore pricking of his wounds, the scout would have argued with himself that he beheld a sleeping mirage of horrors.

"Am I awake and in my sober senses?" he soliloquized, "or is this the fan-toes-mygorry of a cat-a-plasm fit? No, no; the pricking of my rent flesh betokens wakeful reality. What then?" he scanned each separate, fiendish face that crossed his vision; and his mind ran on impossibilities. "If I could only mix their liquor, and they would *all* drink, I'd hev a chance. Poor Doc. Chalmers had laudanum enough in his boxes, if 'twas only in that licker—but it ain't, and oh, Lord, help me, look at their deadheads round the train. Ah't there one left but me? And I ain't left yit—leastwise, if I move—if they diskiver me. I most wish 'twas over. Providence hes bin with ye many times, but nothing short ov a miracle ken help ye now, Wertzal, an miracles ain't worked now-er-days. Whar's Bretto? and the pardners? an all them young gay fellars? God-er-massy! Every one ov 'em is a footin up thar account with the Great Judge, and most likely they won't be through an settled, afore I'll be in thar midst. If I could keep still—but I can't much longer; the pain in these ere fractures is extortionate—leastwise, maddenin. It's gotten light an' diskivery is— Thar's a hellish eye turned square upon me—I'm— Lord, don't forgit me—help me through."

At that moment, with a whoop, the savage pounced upon the scout and jerked him from under the wagon. For once old Wertzal's muscles refused to do his will. The fiend brandished his scalping-knife and buried his dirty fingers in the veteran's hair. The fiery eye of the border hero gazed full and unflinchingly upon the weapon. An instant later and it would have descended, but the savage's arm was caught by an iron hand, and something was said to the Sioux in his own language.

Every fibre of Wertzal's body quivered with helpless rage.

"So," says he, "Grouchy, yer was allers handsome, but yer just devilish pertty when yer dressed up. I swar. How long's yer chain, I wonder?"

"I've got ye now, old Wertz, an' I'm gwine to pay off all the ole scores," was the thick whisper.

"Yer can't do it with one life, Bill," vengefully muttered the scout.

"I'll try it on anyhow."

"How, Bill, now? Why didn't yer let yer chummy get ye a cud ov gristle a minnit ago?"

"Cause I like my meat cooked," returned the fiend, "an' I'll tell how. These fellars hev a way of pilin' up faggits and drivin' a stake in the middle, yer know."

"I've heard so."

"An' they roast ther venison in that way—yer understand, Wertz?"

"Perfectly, Bill. I know yer tender natur as does the frontier settlements—everybody knows it, Bill."

"Don't they?" said the fiend, with a laugh. "When they outlawed me for a hoss thief an' sich trifling things, they didn't know what they was about, 'sactly."

"Yes, they did, Bill; they knowed what they was about, and they know what they're about now. Yer race is a'most run Bill, a'most run."

"Not so nigh as your's, Wertz."

"That may be. I ain't a gwine ter deny what's apparent, and I ain't a gwine to buy off a minnit's time nor a twinge of torter by any promises, for if I was able to git up, if I hadn't only one foot to stand on, an' one arm to fight with, as I ain't got but one eye—thanking ye, Bill, fur that inconvenience—I'd fight ye with the last twitch of my muscles. I would; an' if I could kil ye off the face of the airth, I'd be doin' God's greatest service."

If the scout thought to irritate Grouchy into putting an immediate end to his sufferings, he was mistaken. He had another and a fixed purpose in regard to his sworn foe.

Of a sudden the renegade put a stop to the sports of his savage allies, ordered a general grab of what they chose to carry, and proposed moving away from the scene of the fatal encounter.

With the aid of a swarthy Sioux, Grouchy threw Wertzal upon the back of a horse, and ordered a rapid march. The pains of the scout amounted to keen agony. His garments, soaked and stiffened with blood, adhered to the stiff lips of the wounds, and the rough handling tore open the smarting edges and caused them to bleed afresh.

But as they moved away, his own anguish did not deprive the guide of the feelings of humanity. He looked sorrowfully upon the stiff, recumbent figures about the battered train, and groaned aloud at the suffering in store for living friends who would never know the exact fate of those around him.

It were vain for us to endeavor to take up and follow out the previous history of these poor fellows, who a few hours before were full of life and planning for the future. The papers of the day would have a brief item concerning the increasing barbarity and general fiendishness of the Indians on the plains, and then it would be like a pebble dropped into a lake—after the first few disturbed ripples had flattened themselves down, no more would be thought upon the matter.

When the rapid movements, the torture inflicted upon his wounded flesh, and the dripping blood had happily for old Wertzal, produced insensibility to his situation, he was lashed to the animal; and Grouchy, spurred by his guilty conscience and the knowledge that dangers were likely to cross his path, pushed rapidly toward the fastnesse of the Rocky Mountains.

Before the scout had lost his consciousness, he had realized that his conjectures concerning the Comanches might have been correct. They had probably sighted the murderous Sioux, instead of the train, and were only anxious to escape an encounter; while it was just as probable to suppose that Grouchy had watched the movements of the train from the outset, and had planned a convenient place of attack. Through that long, dreadful day the scout was jolted upon the horse's back by his merciless captor. Food and drink were offered him; his agony was too great to allow of hunger, but his thirst was intolerable.

"Just a taste ov ther sweets in store for yer, Wertz," taunted Grouchy. "I've looked forward to this ere time ever since ye jined the Vigs, an' sot 'em on to me for stampeding horses from the settlements. They mightn't know'd to this day but for you, old chap. I've looked fur this time, an' I calculate yer'll yell fur mercy fore I'm dun with yer, brave as yer be."

"Never, Bill, never, I swar. I won't ask mercy whar I wouldn't give it; fur I'm honest, Bill, an' if I had yer under my hull, I'd squish the life outer yer as quick as outer any other mean, nasty louse. So I shan't ask marcy."

"We'll see when the grease begins ter drip," replied the ruffian.

"Yer'll lose yer fun, Bill, in that perticerlar pint, if yer jounce me a great ways further afore yer begin. Ther's a feelin' about my vitals as must be akin ter death."

Grouchy glanced at the veteran's ashy face, and realized that he spoke the truth; and not desiring to lose a particle of the intended programme, he reluctantly ordered a halt. The sun was but a few hours from setting when they concluded to camp for the night, and unnecessary as it was, the scout was tied hand and foot, so as to make his agony more and more excruciating. Water, water, was the only distinct thought in his mind.

At the proper hour the curtains of night came softly down over the savage camp. The scouts from the elevations had reported no moving thing but buffaloes astir, as far as their long vision extended. Grouchy, who had not rested for several days, was glad to stretch his lank form upon the ground; the half-drunken and wholly stupid Sioux, with grunts of satisfaction, tore apart the venison but slightly cooked before their hastily constructed fire, and long ere the middle of the night, all, even the sentinels, were heavily dozing.

But the wicked are never secure from retribution. Afar to the east upon the plains, afar beyond the hearing of their sluggish ears, heavily thundered a body of horsemen, cavalry, thirsting, burning to overtake and grapple with a murderous band of Apaches, that had pillaged and burned a settlement, and indiscriminately massacred women and children—the old, the young and helpless.

The leader rode with desperate and daring eagerness, panting with furious haste for the contest, swearing eternal enmity to every nation of savages. Robbed at one fell stroke of home, friends and the anticipations that had beautified his future and left a halo on his past, he now was conscious of but one emotion—*revenge*—war to the last.

Of rather peculiar appearance; soft-eyed, clear-cut, handsome face, and long, fair, curling hair, with a voice strong and clear as a clarion, he was at once a combination of the fierce, untameable attributes of manhood, and the tender loving gentleness of woman.

You have heard of him before. It was Joseph Emmet, mentioned in a previous chapter.

Joseph Emmet, who at any time, under any circumstances, would have done credit to an Eastern drawing-room and refined society, who could lift as small and graceful a foot in the dance as ever followed "Weber's wild waltzes" far into the slumberous night, but who, moulded for and by the times and place in which he lived, was likely to graduate from the hard discipline of experience into a border hero.

Even-stroked, jarring, thunderous, the impetuous body of horse came straight on toward the doomed warriors. Their smoke had been sighted upon its first uprising, and after that there was no halting, although the squadron had been for several days almost unceasingly in the saddle.

Yes, the jarring reached foggily and uncertain the whisky-muffled ears. The dozing, drunken braves had the idea that a herd of buffaloes were rushing near. Old Wertzal uncertainly fancied the jar to be the foaming tumble of a waterfall. Grouchy at last with a mighty effort threw off the influence of his own potations and arose to listen. But not in time to save the camp. With a yell that was afterwards to be known on the frontier as "Joe Emmet's bugle," the young pioneer dashed into the camp, followed by his men.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THAT HANDSOME YOUNG MAN.

The "Fat Contributor" says:—

The most revolting display of egotism is that of the multitudinous, handsome young man. There are twenty-seven of him in Cincinnati. The sight of him acts upon sensible people like a dose of ipecacuanha. He has no intimate friends, for no one can come near him without being slobbered over by his egotism. Men despise him; women hate him; fools admire him.

It is the study of his life to know how he can be seen by the most people. The efforts which he makes to solve this problem are very persevering and painstaking. He spends the morning in getting himself up. In the afternoon, if it is pleasant, he promenades the streets, looking languid love into the eyes of every woman he meets, and mentally ejaculating after each one, "How she admires me."

In the evening he goes to the opera, and takes root in the side aisle, pretty far down; and "buys the fond delusion to his soul" that the audience regard him as an Apollo Belvidere. His attitude is easy and confident. Occasionally he looks at the stage, that when he again turns to the delighted audience, his beauty may beam upon them more brightly for the momentary eclipse. When the entertainment is about half through, he transplants himself to the other side of the house, and treats the audience to another view.

On Sunday he goes to church late, of course, marches well up in front, and if it be in fall or winter, turns round and gives the congregation a front view, as he very deliberately sheds his overcoat. Taking his seat, at length, as circumspectly as though he expected to find it red hot, he hangs up his kid covered cane-hook on his moustache. Every five minutes he turns, as if on a swivel, to see whether everybody knows that he is there. When the services are ended, he stands at the door till the congregation has passed out, so that everybody may take a near look at him. He attends all the sociables, fairs, etc. You may always find him where the women are. He is an unmitigated nuisance.

A reward of $5 is hereby offered for the lodgment of any one of him in the Home for Idiots.

☞ A brother of Sergeant Bates, the flag bearer, is at Terre Haute in a line of business similar to the Sergeant's. He shoulders a hod full of mortar, and marches from one end of a ladder to the other with it, without molestation from anybody.

Alice Hartley's Father.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

Poets may sing, and philosophers may teach that life at best has an undertone of sorrow, but in spite of poets and philosophers, there comes a time in almost every life bright with sunshine and roses; then we are thankful, asking ourselves, "Can such happiness last?" and the answer comes soon enough.

A warm gleam of sunshine had fallen across Francis Vincent's path, but an unexpected cloud had come between him and the light, and poor Frank was left to shiver in uncertain gloom.

Uplands was a pretty place. A substantial brown house, well covered with grape-vines and running roses, stood on the verge of the smooth lawn that sloped gently down to the river. That lawn was just the spot for croquet, and Frank's pleasantest memories were connected with it. During many a long Summer afternoon Alice Hartley and he had used mallet and balls as accessories to a more exciting pursuit than croquet. "Oh, sweet, lost Summer time!" Frank sadly thought. The days had passed like a pleasant dream. He loved and was beloved.

Alice Hartley's father was an author—a grave, silent man with flashing eyes, and high forehead of which he was proud, because it resembled that which we see in the portraits of Shakspeare. Her mother was dead.

One September afternoon Frank came over the Uplands. He saw Alice on the porch, but he noticed that Mr. Hartley was not in his customary seat at the desk in his shady little study.

Frank walked up the path in his quick way, with a loving radiance in his true, blue eyes. Alice rose to greet him, but her eyes were cast down, and the hand trembled slightly.

He asked after Mr. Hartley. Her father was in his room, Alice said. Frank talked of trifles merrily and cheerfully, as usual; Alice answered him with a pre-occupied manner and with forced smiles. Silence followed, and Frank proposed croquet.

"Croquet," said Alice, looking at her watch. "Everybody plays croquet. It has become too common."

"All good things are common," laughed Frank, "air, water, light, and flowers——"

"You surely don't mean to compare that stupid game to the things you have mentioned."

Frank looked at Alice curiously. This dislike of the game was very sudden; all along she had been an enthusiastic *croquetteuse*. Alice colored and turned away.

A wild, prolonged cry rang out. It was a man's voice. The sound seemed to come from the house. Alice clutched Frank's arm, and sank back on her seat, pale and trembling.

"What is it?" he asked. "Some one in distress."

"No! no!" she said eagerly; "it comes from the Oak Wood. There's a pic-nic there, and the pic-nickers have been hallooing at intervals all the morning."

"The fools!" said Frank, angry at having been so startled. "I beg pardon. I'll be off. Suppose you walk with me as far as the gate, at least."

A look of relief overspread Alice's face. She arose, and took his arm. Instead of proceeding toward the gate, they took the path by the river. Frank was silent and troubled; he scarcely knew why. Alice seemed to avoid meeting his eyes; her cheeks flushed and paled. A struggle was taking place in her mind.

"Frank," she said, coming to a sudden stop beneath an oak on the edge of the lawn, "Frank, you know I promised to marry you on the first day of the coming year."

"Do you think it probable that I would forget it?" he said, smiling a little, and looking lovingly in her face.

Alice played nervously with a scarlet geranium blossom she held, and then went on—

"Well—well, Frank, it cannot be."

"*What!*" He confronted her, astonished and indignant.

"I am in earnest," she continued, hurriedly, "I *must* not become your wife—"

"Your father, then—"

"No. I break the engagement with my own free will."

"It took two to make it," cried Frank, hotly, "and by Jove! it shall take two to break it."

"But you cannot marry me in spite of myself."

This was a damper. Frank descended from his pedestal. He implored, entreated, and then grew angry again—the while Alice grew whiter and whiter, and raised her eyes appealingly.

"Oh, do not ask me to explain! I cannot. I may be doing wrong in acting thus—but oh, Frank, forgive me, if it be so. Leave me, and do not come again. Some day—some day—I may be able to tell you all."

And then, as if mistrusting her firmness, she fled up to the house.

Francis Vincent stood as if rooted to the spot—bewildered, indignant, irresolute. And this was the end of his happy dream. Was the happiness of his life to be blighted by the caprice of a fickle girl? And yet Alice had seemed so true—so loving. Frank groaned in spirit, and walked home in a wretched state of mind.

His home was a small cottage about a mile from Uplands. He had built and furnished it in the hope of Alice's coming to beautify it. Here he lived all alone, keeping bachelor's hall. A small servant girl came over from Farmer Edgewood's now and then, to sweep and set things to rights. He was junior partner in a manufacturing business. The concern was a novelty in that vicinity, and it was at last beginning to pay something over expenses. Success was at hand, but what did he care for it now?

Each dainty ornament in the little parlor reminded him of Alice. There was an inlaid table he had destined for her work-box—here, her favorite pictures—a St. Cecilia, a Madonna after Murillo, and a bunch of fern sprays, drawn by himself. He saw no beauty in them now.

When his mind had grown calm, he perplexed himself in a vain attempt to account for this sudden change in Alice Hartley. He closely scrutinized his own conduct. He saw nothing that could have given her offence. And her abrupt dismissal of him without any explanation—it was too much! He could find no cause for it; he said bitterly, "Women are naturally fickle, and she is no exception to the rule!" But Frank might philosophize and grow cynical, yet philosophy and cynicism could not extinguish love.

Two months passed. Frank Vincent worked hard at his business. Hard work is an excellent specific against bitter thoughts, and Frank saw no reason why he should not fulfil the duties of his position, simply because he had been disappointed.

Now and then he stole past Uplands at dusk, hoping to catch a glimpse of Alice—despising himself for his weakness even while he did so. Sometimes he would see the outline of a fair head cast on the curtain of the study window by the lamplight.

From various people Frank heard that of the five servants formerly retained at Uplands three had been discharged—Miles Burke, an old family servant, and Susan Hill, the cook. Frank met both of these several times; but they were taciturn. Frank could only learn that their young mistress wrote from morning to night—"History and stuff—bad luck to it!" said honest Miles, "an' the swate crathure will be the death o' herself wid her scribblin'!" Nothing further than this could he discover.

Days sped on. On the evening of the thirty-first of December, Frank returned to his solitary home sadder than usual. This was to have been the eve of the bridal.

He had brought home a large sum of money which had been paid him after bank-time. He locked it up in the safe that stood in the small room adjoining his bedroom. He placed his loaded pistols on a table near the safe—not that he had serious fears of robbery—but he deemed it best to be prepared. A door with several panes of glass set in it was between his chamber and the small room. He sat down by the fire to read and think, when he remembered that he had left the garden-gate unlocked.

As he was going down-stairs with the intention of fastening it, a man brushed past him, nearly overturning him. The man ascended rapidly, and entered the only lighted room—the bedroom. Frank followed him. He was greatly relieved, as well as surprised, to recognize in this mysterious stranger, Mr. Hartley.

"Please be seated, sir," said Frank, and as the other made no reply, he continued: "I am happy to see you, sir."

Without replying Mr. Hartley went to the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. Frank noticed that his attire was disarranged and his coat torn in several places. He said nothing when Frank demanded his reason for this unwarrantable proceeding, but he gazed steadfastly at the young man with eyes which seemed as if burning coals were gleaming in their depths. And then he laughed—such a laugh!—the laugh of a demon, so thrilling yet low, so full of malice and triumph. Frank shuddered at the sound. The conviction dawned upon him that Mr. Hartley was mad! He was locked in with a maniac! Face to face with this terrible truth, Frank strove to bring all the power of his intellect to a focus. He tried to contemplate with calmness his position. The madman spoke at last.

"Dost know me? I am Brutus."

Frank determined to humor him. "Most welcome, noble Brutus."

"And who art thou?" Before Frank could answer, the madman cried, wildly brandishing his arms, "I knew thee, Cæsar! Tyrant!" With the quickness of a flash of light he drew a gleaming razor from his bosom and advanced slowly toward Frank, murmuring in a hissing tone, "To cut the head off and then hack the limbs—Cæsar must bleed for it. Let's kill him boldly."

A cold sweat came upon Frank's brow. His pistols were in the other room. His heart sunk as he recollected this.

"I am not Cæsar," he called out in desperation, "I am—I am Cassius!"

The madman paused. He fixed his burning eyes on Frank. The hand that held the razor dropped at his side, and he said:

"I mistook thee for Cæsar. Come—come to my orchard. There we'll meet Casca, and plot and plan. Ha! ha! ha!" He approached the door.

Frank's heart gave a great leap. Unluckily, he seized hold of the back of a chair, intending to use it in self-defence, should the maniac's mood change. Hartley saw the movement, and turned fiercely.

"Then hast lied, Cæsar!" he cried, wresting the chair from Frank's hand and seizing him by the throat. "Speak, hands, for me! To cut the head off, and then hack the limbs!"

Frank struggled with the vigor of despair; but Hartley possessed the strength of madness. Slowly—for the task was a hard one—he forced Frank down until he was in a kneeling position, still clutching his victim by the throat, and crying with wild bursts of laughter,

"'Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!
Run this dance, proclaim, cry it about the streets.'"

It was horrible! Frank felt the grasp tightening at his throat. His brain seemed bursting. A dreadful sense of suffocation came upon him. Even in that half instant, as he saw the glittering razor making shining circles in the air above him, he wished that it might descend and save him from death by strangulation. He made one frantic effort to free himself, but only succeeded in twisting his head to one side. A piercing shriek struck upon his failing sense of hearing. Through the glass pane he caught sight of the white, terrified face of Alice Hartley. And then the room swam around him, and all was dark.

* * * * * * *

Yes, it was Alice who stood without. She had tracked her father hither, and had just come in time to witness the appalling scene we have endeavored to describe. She tried to open the door. It was locked. She shrieked and called in agony, "Father! father!" But now the maniac paid no heed to the voice that was wont to control him. His gleaming eyes did not stray from Frank Vincent's face.

Could she stand still and see her lover murdered? Her glance fell on Frank's pistols on the table beside her. With one of these she might put an end to the deadly struggle—and perhaps kill her father! She dared not—she could not. She was unable to turn away from the sight. Frank's head sunk lower and lower. The flashing razor blinded her. She wrung her hands. Her glance stole to the pistols. She prayed to be delivered from this terrible alternative. She had been there scarce a second, yet a whole lifetime seemed to have passed.

A rapid step sounded on the stairs, and Miles Burke bounded into the room. He took in the situation at once. He seized one of the pistols. There was a report; a shattering of glass, and Mr. Hartley fell backward.

"Faix, if it's the heart, I'll never forgive meself!" cried Miles, making an assault on the door, "for it was the only sound part about him."

* * * * *

The first dawn of the new year was breaking in the east. Its cold gray light fell through the window upon the bed on which Mr. Hartley lay. He was dying. It was not the pistol-shot alone that had produced this effect, the physician said, but it was almost wholly due to the exhaustion consequent on the madman's violent paroxysms. Mr. Hartley had grown sane now, as the last spark of life was flickering away. A clergyman was sent for, and had just administered the last rites.

It was very strange and unreal to Frank Vincent, to think that this room, now so quiet in the presence of death, had lately been the scene of a fierce struggle. The marks of the maniac's fingers were yet plainly visible on Frank's throat. The dying man had sent for him. Frank approached the bedside. Mr. Hartley pressed his hand, at the same time whispered something to the clergyman. The latter hesitated, and then said—

"Mr. Hartley desires that his daughter and Mr. Vincent should be married before he dies."

Frank look anxiously toward Alice. Alice flushed a little, and fixed her tearful eyes on her father's face.

"If it's going to be done," said the doctor, aside to Frank, "it had better be soon, for I can't promise him another hour of existence."

"Francis—Francis Vincent, you will be good to my child, won't you?" said Mr. Heartly, piteously, with a violent effort. "The last few months seem a blank to me, but I know that she gave you up for my sake. She was not to blame, believe me. She has been a true daughter; she will be as true a wife. I cannot die content until you make her yours. Let me repair—"

But his voice failed. Frank took Alice's

hand. The doctor lent his huge seal ring for the occasion—and they were married. Just as the ceremony was completed, Mr. Hartley's soul fled, and death came to still his troubled mind.

Alice was a long time recovering from the dreadful agitation of that night. It appeared that Mr. Hartley had overtasked himself mentally and physically. This often ends in paralysis, but in his case, it had ended in insanity. Miles Burke had noticed the first symptoms, but fearful of unnecessarily alarming his young mistress, he had been silent. So when Mr. Hartley grew violent on the morning of the day of Frank Vincent's last visit to Uplands, the blow had fallen suddenly on Alice. Her duty seemed plain to her. It was to drop everything, except the care of her father.

"And why did you not tell me this? Why did you not trust me?" asked Frank, as she made this explanation.

"Because I knew, Frank, that you would not approve of my plan. I knew that you would oppose my wish for keeping my father at home. Oh, Frank, I could not think of letting papa go away among strangers, or into an asylum! I feared that if I told you, you would think I was in danger."

"I would have certainly used all my influence to prevent you from being so lovingly imprudent, if you had but trusted me."

"And I had another reason. Papa was engaged on an historical work. The publishers had paid him a large sum in advance, and I was aware that he had expended a greater part of it in satisfying a mortgage on Uplands. Papa had contracted to have the work finished by the end of the year; but when he became insane only two-thirds of it had been written. The money could not be refunded as had been agreed on in case of failure, so I determined to complete it myself. The material was already arranged. I sifted, studied, compared, and wrote. Two weeks ago I sent the last sheet to the publishers. I resolved to devote the rest of my life to the care of my father, and I was not sufficiently selfish to wish you to share the burden."

"But, Alice, did you not think of the suffering this would inflict on us both? And did you not know that your father would be better off under the care of a professional attendant?"

"I only thought that my duty required the sacrifice. On *that* night papa became utterly unmanageable. He tore the sash from his window, and climbed down by means of the grape-vine arbor. I followed him, and Miles came after me as soon as possible. You know where we found him." And Alice shuddered. "If I acted imprudently in doing what I did, you will forgive me, Frank?"

"I love you the better for it," said Frank, and the light in his eyes told her it was true. "It may have been a mistake, but it was a noble one. And after all, Alice, we were married on New Year's Day!"

"An' it's many happy returns I'm wishin' you!" cried Miles Burke, stumbling over the coal-scuttle in his enthusiasm.

TREGARTHEN'S TRYST.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE TRYST WAS KEPT.

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray crags, O sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Can never come back to me. *Tennyson.*

A curious Christmas eve, with white snow lying thick and soft over the Cornish hills and moors, and blue flashes of lightning glimmering weird and faint in the horizon, making the sea and sky show black by comparison under their strange, unearthly radiance.

"A bad look out for to-morrow," said one fisherman to another, as they stood anxiously regarding the weather, "and an ill-omened night for the business up yonder."

"Aye, aye, is this the night?" granted his companion, looking up to where the lights from a large mansion showed clear and bright through the darkness, and shone out over the dark waters. "This is the night, sure enough. It's twenty years to-night since old Tregarthen died—you'll mind of it, mate?"

"Aye, right well. I don't know that ever I've seen it lighten over the snow since. That was an awful night—storm and wind and tempest; my mother used say that she heard the old man's groans even to Milendreth yonder. There was something on his mind, more than the parson could pray away, I'm thinking."

"Aye, I doubt there was. Twenty years—how the time does run to be sure. And the heirs are to take possession to-night. There'll be a mort of squabbling, I'm sure, over the old place."

"I don't think there will. There be but two left—Mr. Hugh, that's been away in the wars, and Miss Ailie, his cousin, who's coming right away from a French boarding-school. They are to divide the fortune equally, they say."

"Happen they'll marry and share it equally. Tregarthen's a place none would like to halve."

"I wouldn't live in it if it was given to me for nothing."

"Why?"

"They say it's haunted."

The voice of the speaker sank to a tone of mystery as his comrade questioned him, and they sauntered off, the one telling, the other hearing, as wild and weird a story of the supernatural as it ever entered into the brain of a Cornishman to conceive, and the brains of the dwellers in that western promontory are fertile in the hatching and receiving of ghost stories. Hardly an isolated house in the whole county is without its ghost. Tregarthen was an isolated house; but there was nothing gloomy or ghostlike about it externally. It stood on very high ground, overlooking the sea for many a mile, but yet surrounded by woods, which grew, as they do in some of the picturesque Cornish bays, very nearly down to the water's edge. There was but a precipitous wall of rock, a stretch of shining gray sand, between the Tregarthen woods and the water, which looked so calm and glassy on this winter's night.

Twenty years before our story begins, the master of Tregarthen had been a morose, misanthropical bachelor, living alone in the house that had descended to him from a long line of ancestors, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." He was not without kindred. His two younger brothers were happily married, with homes and prattling children to vary the monotony of their lives; but they never came near him. No one knew what had made Julius Tregarthen what he was. He had gone abroad years before a *débonair*, light-hearted gentleman, and returned in twelve months what he remained to the day of his death. The property was absolutely his, to do what he liked with, yet no one fawned upon him in hopes of prospective wealth. There came to be such a mystery about him, that even his brothers kept aloof, and not even the news of the death of the eldest, and the distress of his widow and her child, drew him from his retirement.

"Of course, Hugh will be my heir," he said to his lawyer; "that is, some time, and he must be properly educated. But I cannot have them here."

Once or twice he saw the boy, a little fellow in petticoats, but evinced no particular interest in him.

When the little Hugh was four years old, a terrible tragedy took place at Tregarthen. A furious night of storm and wind passed over the south coast of England, lightning gleamed over the snow, and through the howling of the angry wind came the rumbles of distant thunder. A cry for help at midnight from the chamber of Julius Tregarthen aroused his terrified domestics, to find him dying. Past all help was he; and the messenger sent to summon medical aid stumbled at the threshold of the French window over the corpse of a woman—a corpse for many hours, as the set face and rigid limbs told only too plainly; but who she was, or whence she came, or what she wanted there, no one could tell. "Driven there by the storm, most likely," they all said, and carried her into the house, where death was silently waiting for another victim. Julius Tregarthen died that night, never having regained his consciousness. Apoplexy was the cause of his death, the doctors declared, and the two corpses lay waiting for inquest and burial beneath the same roof.

"Death from natural causes" was the verdict in both cases, and they were buried—Mr. Tregarthen as became the representative of an old family, and the nameless woman as became a vagrant and pauper. No one came to claim her, no one came to look at her dead face, or to fold the thin hands over the breast that had once beat high with love and hope. Like the rest of humanity, she was a nameless, lifeless thing, to be buried and forgotten as soon as might be.

Mr. Herbert Tregarthen, the only remaining brother, directed the funeral, and assumed all the importance of the head of the family. Hugh's would be a long minority—of course, he would be guardian conjointly with the mother, and he would keep up the old place in proper style; he only hoped that his brother had not made any idiotic disposal of the property.

Not idiotic, perhaps, but certainly eccentric and peculiar. Perhaps the dead man had mistrusted his brother, perhaps his misanthropical aversion to his kind extended to his belongings as well, who can tell? Any way, Julius Tregarthen's will came to be regarded as one of the wonders of the country side, and remained so for many a long year.

It set forth that, "being of sound mind, &c., &c.," he devised, first, several large sums to charities, then legacies and annuities to servants, and then—what made Herbert Tregarthen's hair stand on end as he listened to it.

The estate, house, and gardens were to remain as they were, and the money lying to his account at his bankers, and out in other securities, was to be collected and placed in the funds at the current rate of interest for twenty years. The house was to be kept in repair, trusty persons being deputed to reside therein, and the revenues from the estate were to be carefully collected from time to time. At the end of twenty years—on Christmas-eve, 1858—his heirs, the children of his brothers, were to meet in the old house and claim their share of the inheritance. The will further enjoined whoever should live in it to make it bright and lively, "to take warning by his example, and blot out, by the cheerful presence of youth and purity, the memory of the foul stain he had brought upon it."

What the stain could possibly be no one could imagine. Julius Tregarthen had lived a pure and blameless life to all outward seeming, and not a word had ever been breathed against him.

Herbert was furious when he heard the will, and declared it should be set aside—that his brother was mad, &c.; but the lawyer showed him quietly that his client had been in full possession of his senses.

A thousand pounds a-piece was given to Herbert and the mother of Hugh, and with that, though sorely disappointed, they had to be content.

Time rolled on, and long before the twenty years had expired, Hugh Tregarthen lay in the family vault by the side of his brother, and knew not the mystery of the curious will.

One by one his children and their mother followed him—all but one—till, when the twenty years had elapsed, and the Christmas-eve of 1858 had come, only two persons were left alive to claim Julius Tregarthen's legacy—Hugh, whose widowed mother had died while he was yet a boy, and his own youngest child, Eulalia, or, to give her the pet synonym so pretty and so common in the West, Ailie.

Mark Pengelly and his wife Mary, who had been placed in charge of the house, were busy for many a long day before the eventful 24th. They had no idea what the two young people were like. Miss Tregarthen had never seen the place, and Hugh had never been there since his boyhood.

They were old retainers of the Tregarthens, and had stood by the miserable deathbed of that memorable Christmas, and contemplated a change with dismay.

"We shan't know the old place, wife," Mark said, as they stood watching at the library window for the arrival of the visitors. "Dost see how it lightens, old woman, just as it did that night?"

"Ugh! It's an ill-omened night," she said, shuddering. "I feel as if evil were coming upon us. You know what the old saw says—

'See the lightning over the snow,
Look for dole and wait for woe.'

Woe came then; and I've never seen lightning over the snow since. It's coming again to-night, Mark."

"Nothing's coming but a young girl and a fine young soldier, Nance. Parsons, and wedding bells, and christenings after are more likely to come of it than anything else."

"You've made up your mind they shall marry," she said.

"I daresay they will, if Mr. Hugh hasn't found a wife out in the East."

"Or Miss Ailie a lover at school. What a flash! and, Mark, here comes the thunder. Heaven save us!"

"That's not thunder; it's a carriage. They are coming."

Not they: only one—a young girl of exceeding beauty, who descended from a carriage as they gained the door, and paid the driver with the utmost self-possession.

"Are you Mark Pengelly?" she asked.

"Yes, miss."

"I am Eulalia Tregarthen. Where is my cousin?"

"Not come yet, miss. Will you please to come in?"

She directed a small box—her only luggage—to be brought in, and shook hands with Nancy.

"Are you come alone, miss?" asked the old woman, in surprise.

"Yes, quite alone. All the way from Plymouth in a fly—only think!" she said, laughing! "I wonder what Madame St. Amarinthe would say if she knew? Where shall I go?"

They took her into the library, and she removed her hat and cloak, unveiling a beautiful face and a perfectly-shaped head, round which a wealth of golden-brown hair was coiled in a fashion that was wont to drive her schoolfellows mad with envy because they could none of them imitate it successfully, yet which cost her only a single twist of the hand to execute. They brought her refreshment, and offered her one of the younger servants (for a staff had been engaged *pro tem.*) to wait on her.

"I don't want any more waiting on," she said. "I would rather talk to you because you know the place. I had a maid, but she wouldn't come here. I've heard all about Uncle Julius, and a dead woman being found here in the library. Why, this must be the very room!"

She looked around with curiosity on her pretty face, but no trace of fear. She had a thorough contempt for ghosts, had Ailie Tregarthen.

"Yes, miss; this is the room," Nancy replied. "She was found out there by that window. It was just such a night as this, too—lightning and snow."

"And does she walk?"

"She, miss! Who?"

"The woman."

"Not that I know of, miss," Nancy said, nervously, the color fading out of her rosy old face at the idea.

"But people say so."

"I daresay there's a deal of ghosts in Cornwall, Miss Ailie," Mark said grimly; and Ailie laughed merrily.

"All the better if she does'nt," she said; "I don't want to make her acquaintance, nor Uncle Julius's either; and the tale I was told was that they go hand-in-hand on stormy nights 'round the house and round the house,' as the children say."

"Oh, don't talk like that, miss," said Nancy, imploringly; "it makes a person's flesh creep."

"Well, I won't; but I do like a good ghost—one that you really can fancy you believe in. What a time my cousin is! I have kept the tryst more faithfully than he has."

Born since the death of Julius Tregarthen, the mystery of the house had cast no gloom upon her. Too young to sorrow for her parents, or to remember more than one or two of her brothers and sisters, her orphaned life had been mostly passed at school, and the advent of her nineteenth birthday, and her arrival at the old house, had been the one event of her existence looked forward to with mingled dread and expectation.

It had come now, and she found herself alone with two pleasant, comely old people, in a cheerful room, well warmed and lit, with the storm outside shut out by crimson curtains, and such a look of home about it as made her heart leap.

Here she was, free from the thraldom of school, waiting the advent of her cousin Hugh, the unknown idol of her girlish heart ever since she exchanged her short frocks and trousers for the more flowing draperies of womanhood.

Hugh Tregarthen, though only twenty-four, was a hero to many another woman besides his cousin Ailie. A commission had been purchased for him very early, and at eighteen he had entered the army, to be sent to the Crimea before he had learned what soldiering really was, and to come unscathed through all the horrors of that disastrous campaign. From there he went to India to help to quell the mutiny in that stricken land, and came back Captain Hugh Tregarthen, with a limp, and a name that made him the idol of all the women, the envy of all the men.

Ailie sat looking at the fire, and wondering what her cousin would be like, and whether she should live at Tregarthen or be sent off elsewhere.

"If he has a wife I shall hate her!" she said to herself. "Ah, here he is."

The door-bell rang loudly, there was the commotion of an arrival, and Mark Pengelly flung open the door, announcing—

"Mr. Hugh, miss—leastwise, Captain Tregarthen."

And two gentlemen entered the library. For a moment she hesitated, and then the taller and the darker of the two held out his hand.

"My cousin Ailie, I suppose—perhaps, I should say Miss Tregarthen?"

"Oh, no, please—say Ailie."

"Well, Ailie, I am very glad to meet you, my dear. I am Hugh Tregarthen; this is my friend, Major Torrens."

CHAPTER II.

HOW SOME ONE CAME TO THE TRYST UNBIDDEN.

Oh, it was frightful there to see
A lady richly clad as she,
Beautiful exceedingly! *Coleridge.*

Major Torrens looked at Ailie as she stood there with the soft light glimmering on her pretty face and golden hair, and his heart went out to her, and was lost to him forever. He was older than Hugh Tregarthen, though, being fairer, he looked, if anything, younger—a man who had knocked about the world, and seen service in almost every part of it; but until he stood before this young girl in the old library of this Cornish country house he had never known what love was.

He actually trembled, this soldier of fourteen years' service, under the gaze of this young girl, a stranger five minutes since, and the hand that touched hers was cold with a passionate emotion that startled the major himself.

Hugh Tregarthen saw nothing in his cousin but a pretty, ladylike girl, rather missish in her manner, but pleasant withal, and Ailie was decidedly disappointed in her Cousin Hugh. Not that he was not everything a cousin should be in his manner of greeting her. He was handsome, and a hero, but he was not like his friend. She thought she had never seen any one so handsome as this grave, stalwart, fair-haired soldier, who blushed and stammered in her presence like a great schoolboy.

The three soon settled down to a comfortable supper, served to the best of Nancy's skill, and though homely, it was by no means an uninviting repast.

When it was ended, Hugh proposed that they should stay and pass the Christmas there. Ailie made no objection; and as for Major Torrens, had Hugh asked him to eat a Christmas pudding out on the beach, with the snow whirling about his head, he would have done it gladly so that Ailie was by his side.

"Then it's agreed we stay here—afterward we go into law matters. You will be a rich heiress, my pretty cousin, and your own mistress, too, free to do what you like with your wealth. Is not the prospect a pleasant one?"

"I hardly know, Cousin Hugh," she replied, feeling a strange wish creeping over her that she had some one to take care of her and her money.

By the terms of her father's will she was free from all control. Eighteen had been the age he fixed upon for her taking possession of the small sum he had been able to leave her, and she was nineteen now. She used to think that she would like her cousin to be the one to take care of her and her money, but she did not seem to fancy him so much now. Perhaps it was that Major Torrens was so much handsomer, so much more her ideal of a man. Any way, she caught herself thinking, as she ate her supper with a hearty, girlish appetite, how very nice it would be to have such an arm to lean upon, such a heart to guide, such a head to counsel her in her path through life.

The storm still raged while they were at their meal—a strange, weird storm, with almost incessant flashes of lightning lighting up the snow with a blue, unearthly radiance, and the clouds drifting hurriedly across the sky in black masses, driven by a wind that was almost unfelt below. There was very little thunder—a constant grumbling in the far distance was the only sound that accompanied the electrical phenomenon of the winter lightning.

"How curious it seems," Ailie Tregarthen said, after an unusually vivid flash, "to see lightning in Winter." She walked to the window, and drew aside the heavy velvet curtain. As curious as all this old place seems to be," she added; "I seem to have come to a region of enchantment."

"We must find out whether there is anything so earthly as beds in it, however," Hugh said, ringing the bell again. "It is close upon eleven o'clock."

Nancy Pengelly, being summoned, announced that four bedrooms were ready for occupation.

"I did not know how many would be here," she said. "Will you please to see yours, miss?"

"Oh, not till I go to bed; I'm sure it's nice. Where is it?"

"Just over this room, miss. The window is right above where you are standing now."

"Ah, then I'm sure it's pretty and nice, and all that. I'm too lazy to go up-stairs till I'm obliged. What's that light over there, Mrs. Pengelly?"

"Out at sea, miss?"

"Yes."

"That's the Eddystone—the lighthouse, you know.

"How pretty it looks. And this terrace walk, how far does it go."

"Along this side of the house, miss, and part of the west side, too. It is considered a very nice walk in Summer time."

"I'm sure it is. I should like to go out now, this very minute. How wild it all looks with the lightning gleaming on it."

As she spoke she unfastened the window, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the old woman, stepped out alone on the terrace. She had been gone but a few moments when a piercing scream broke the stillness. The gentlemen jumped up from their gossip over the fire and hurried to the window, followed by Nancy. They saw Miss Tregarthen hurrying toward them, and before they could reach her she fell senseless on the snow.

Hastily despatching Nancy for assistance, they rushed out, Major Torrens snatching up the lamp, and Hugh following close on his heels. They lifted the apparently lifeless form of the maiden from the snow, and carried her tenderly into the room. In a few minutes she opened her eyes, and looked round with a frightened gaze.

"Where is she?" she cried.

"What was it Ailie? What was the matter, Miss Tregarthen?" exclaimed both the gentlemen at once as they bent over her. "Has anything frightened you?"

"A woman out there!" replied the girl, and her voice rose to a shrill scream, as a flash of lightning filled the room with its blue, unearthly radiance, and a clap of thunder broke over their heads with an appalling roar. "See there! There she is again, coming up to the window! A woman, with black hair, all in white, with a cloak dragging behind her! She is beating on the window! She wants to come in! Keep her out, Cousin Hugh! Save me from her, or I shall die!"

And she fell into a passion of hysterical tears, from which it took all the remedies known to Mrs. Pengelly and the two gentlemen to revive her.

The clock in the hall was striking twelve, and the storm had died away to the faintest whisper, when she was able to sit up and thank them for their care.

"I suppose I must be tired," she said; "I didn't feel so, and the woman seemed to frighten me, somehow, gliding toward me on the terrace. Who was she, Cousin Hugh?"

"A creature of your fancy, my dear. There was no one there."

"Nonsense! I couldn't fancy a woman. She came right up the terrace, dragging her cloak behind her, and just this instant she tried to come in through the window. She looked so cold, and wild, and miserable, I suppose she frightened me. I never was so stupid before."

"It was fancy, Miss Tregarthen; we saw no one," Major Torrens said, slyly caressing the hand her faintness had permitted him to clasp. "There has been no one here but ourselves."

"I do believe you'll try to persuade me that I have seen the Tregarthen ghost," she said, with a nervous laugh. "Oh, I've heard all about it, and I shouldn't be afraid of a dozen of them; but I *should* like to know where that woman went to."

To pacify her they went out and searched and made inquiries, but no trace of any one could be found. No footmark in the snow but her own betrayed an intruder. The servants had seen nothing, heard nothing of any one. The night was too bad for any one from the adjacent town to come to Tregarthen, and the mystery was unsolved.

Ailie was herself the next morning, mirthful and happy, flitting in and out of the old place like a bird, and exploring all its nooks and corners with a girl's curiosity.

A happy, merry Christmas the three spent in the old Tregarthen halls, and the future of two out of three, so strangely met together, was settled before the anniversary of the day when the angels' song of peace and good will to all mankind had passed once more over the earth.

Major Torrens told Hugh Tregarthen of the impression Ailie had made upon him, and before the eventful 25th had gone by, he had whispered to her that he thought her lovely beyond all created beings.

But we need not linger on this part of our story; their love and their happiness has little to do with Tregarthen's Tryst. Hugh took up his residence in the old house, and within six months gave his cousin and her fortune to the man he loved best on earth.

A pretty wedding, a lovely bride, a hearty farewell from all, and Tregarthen was shut up again; but only for a little while this time. Mr. and Mrs. Torrens were to take up their residence there when the honeymoon was over, renting the old place of its new owner.

Hugh Tregarthen went away with his regiment, a bachelor still, leading a pleasant, easy-going life, such as plenty of money and the absence of care alone can ensure. Tregarthen was his—a sum of money equal to the value of half the estate had been handed over to Major Torrens as his wife's dowry, and that gentleman being wealthy as well as his bride, the old house was to be kept up in a style undreamed of by many generations of Tregarthens.

Ailie declared she would have the style of everything preserved. The heavy old furniture was "in keeping," she declared. One especial piece of antiquity she begged of Hugh for her very own, "to have and to hold," she laughingly declared, and he gave it to her. It was a cumbersome old carved cabinet, full of yellow-looking papers, and she declared its ugliness to be perfection.

"Keep it by all means, my dear, and put it in your drawing-room, if you like," he said, laughing.

"That I will. I mean to rummage to the very bottom of it some day. Who knows what I may find among all those rusty old letters?"

"Nothing that will pay you, my dear. The lawyers went over every one of them with me. They ought to have been burnt before now."

But Ailie laughingly declared nothing should be touched till she came back, and turned the key of her treasure, and carried it off with her in triumph.

A happy wife she came back, all joyous hope and anticipation, to take up her abode in her family home, so altered and renovated now that she scarcely knew it for the same place. But Tregarthen did not agree with her—at least, it seemed so. From the first day of her settling down there she began to droop. Month after month passed by, and she faded perceptibly to all.

"I'm losing my reason, Harry," she said, one night, when Christmas was coming round again. "I am going mad! It is no bodily illness that ails me."

"Going mad! My darling, what a notion! What makes you think so?"

"That woman! She will kill me!"

"What woman?"

"The woman I saw on the terrace the night we came here. Harry, I see her so often."

"See *her!* My darling, there is no woman there!"

"No, that's it; but I saw one. I see one now, night after night—a woman with a white, wild face, and long, flowing hair. She comes up the terrace to this window, and stands here as I saw her then. Sometimes she fades all in a heap here, close to the casement, sometimes she stands still till she seems to fade away in the darkness, and I wake as if from a bad dream, sick and shivering with a horror that has gone near to kill me."

Her husband clasped her to his breast, gathering her in his arms as though he would fain shield her from all harm, and he thought with a creeping shudder of the story concerning the place. He must see to it.

"It is no fancy, dear. I should know her anywhere, she is so peculiar looking. Her eyebrows are very dark and arched, and her hair parts on one side, and waves from her forehead in a peculiar manner. She has a curious mark on the back of her right hand."

"How closely you must have seen her, dear."

"I always feel as if I must; I cannot take my eyes off her, and then when I wake—for it must be a dream, Harry—oh, I cannot tell you how I shudder with cold and horror!"

"My poor darling, how you must have suffered! But we will go away for a time. In London you will see fresh faces, lead a new life, and forget, I hope, all that has been so terrible here."

Ailie gladly consented to leave Tregarthen. Her untold fear had been weighing her down till she was becoming almost a monomaniac.

The major was a man of prompt action, so he was not long before he had removed her to London, and placed her in the hands of one of the most eminent physicians of the day.

It was not long before they were met by Hugh, full of sympathy for his pretty cousin, but radiant with some secret happiness of his own. The secret was too big to be kept. Mr. and Mrs. Torrens had not been in London an hour before they found it out. Hugh Tregarthen was in love, and going to be married.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE TRYST WAS REMEMBERED.

In her ear he whispers gayly,
"If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watched thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well."
Tennyson.

It was even so—Hugh Tregarthen had met his fate, and in a place at which the world, had it known, would have held up its righteous hands and shuddered in horror. He had first seen the girl he loved on the boards of a theatre—had heard a joyous young voice singing in the conventional village scene of a stage merrymaking—had looked to see whose voice it was, and had lost his heart forever.

"I must be going mad," he said to himself, as he caught himself watching at the stage door, in a drizzle of fog-charged rain, to see his new divinity pass out.

"Cora Benzonezi" was the somewhat singular name put down in the bills, and he imagined it to be assumed. He was mistaken; it had been the girl's mother's name, and she had never been known by any other. He saw her go out with an elderly person, who might have been her mother, and walk quickly away, plainly dressed, and simple and quiet in manner. He tried to forget her face, and to keep away from the Royal Polygon Theatre, but it was no use—night after night he was attracted there by the charm of her fresh young voice.

Hers was no grand position in the profession she got her living by—no coronated carriages thronged the doors, while their owners flung bouquets and jewels at her pretty feet. She was simply a hard-working, modest girl, who earned her living honestly, and was a very useful member of the Polygon company.

Hugh Tregarthen was not a man to win a girl's affections lightly, and then whistle her down the wind when his fancy had spent itself. He set about his wooing like the honorable gentleman he was; for, with none in the world to gainsay him, if he had taken a beggar-woman home to queen it at Tregarthen, he resolved, if this young actress proved worthy, to make her his wife.

He found out where she lived, and called on the elderly person—a Mrs. Barton—with whom she resided. He timed his visit when he knew the girl was away, and stated his intention in a straightforward, honest way, that considerably astonished the comely, cleanly old woman, whom he presumed to be Cora's mother.

"No; I'm not her mother, sir," she replied, in answer to his questions, "though she's like a dear daughter to me."

"Then who is she? What is her name?"

"Ah, that I don't know, sir! I don't know whether she's a right to any name but the one she goes by—it was her mother's. Poor Cora Benzonezi! She was a prettier creature than her daughter, lovely as my darling is!"

"Tell me all you know about her—don't keep anything from me. If she is base-born, I don't think it will make any difference in my feelings, so she be good and pure herself."

"That she is, bless her," said the old lady, fervently. "As to her birth, I don't suppose any one will ever know about that. Her mother, poor soul, said she was married—though Heaven knows whether she ever had been, or if she had been deceived, like so many. Ah me, it's many a long year ago now?"

"How many?"

"One and twenty years, sir. Cora's all that, though she doesn't look it. Ah, me! I shall be a lonely old woman when any one takes her away from me."

Hugh Tregarthen could have listened all day to the praises of the girl who had so suddenly stolen his heart away from him, but he was eager to hear more of her antecedents. The story the old woman told was a curious one, but she offered to give him proof of its truth, if proof were needed.

She stated that she knew Cora's mother very well as an actress in Paris, where her own husband was employed as a property-maker in one of the theatres. The young lady, being an orphan, lodged with them, and was like a sister to her. A lucrative engagement was offered to her at Berlin, and she went thither, remaining away over a year, keeping up a correspondence with her old friend the whole time.

"I thought her letters grew rather constrained at last," Mrs. Barton went on; "but there came one after awhile, asking me would I take her in again. 'She was in some trouble,' she said, 'and had no one in the world to help her through it.' Of course I said I would—and as soon as she got my letter she came back. She was only the shadow of her old self, and was on the eve of becoming a mother. 'I'm married,' she said, bitterly, when I asked her about it; 'an honest woman, as you English people call it. Will you take care of me till I can go to my husband? I have plenty of money.' It wasn't a question of money between her and me, for I liked her very much, and she did stay. She never named her husband's name to me, nor showed me her marriage lines; she only said that after the child was born she would go to him and make him do her and it justice. My little darling—for I've looked upon her as mine all her life—was born in November, 1838, and three weeks afterward her mother went away."

"Deserted her?"

"Heaven only knows, sir. I don't think she meant to do so. She left her in my charge, and she left all her own things and some valuable jewelry—Cora has it now—and told us she was going to her husband. We were loth to let her go, for she wasn't fit to travel, but she said she should go mad if she stayed, and she went. She bade us take good care of the child, and said she should be back in a fortnight; but from that hour we never saw her, nor could get any clue to what became of her. We never could hear of any gentleman who seemed to pay her more particular attention than any other—she was much sought after by every one—and nothing has ever happened to throw any light on the mystery. My husband grew so fond of the child that he kept her. She brought a blessing with her, for we prospered well until he died, and now she helps me. I keep a home for her, and she earns the money."

And a neat little house it was, Mr. Tregarthen thought, as he listened to the curious story. A fitting nest for such a pretty bird.

How he sped in his wooing need not be told here. His utmost scrutiny could discover no flaw in Cora's life, and he laid his heart at her feet with the feeling that, if she refused him, the world would hold no more joy for him—life no more pleasure.

She did not refuse him. She soon learned to love this soldierly gentleman, who blushed and trembled in her presence like a boy, and she said "Yes" with a shy blush of pleasure mounting over her cheeks, and a feeling that there had suddenly opened to her a vista of happiness and brightness she had never dreamed of in her wildest visions. She had no idea how wealthy her lover was—two or three hundred a-year and a snug little home had been the height of her ambition, and it never entered her head to imagine the beauties of Tregarthen, or the household of which she would be the mistress.

Having no friends to please or offend to whom their marriage could be of any possible interest, they resolved upon a quiet wedding, and keeping their secret from all except those immediately concerned. So Cora went on with her duties at the theatre, preparing in the meantime a modest *trousseau*, which made Hugh Tregarthen laugh mightily in secret as he thought of the silks and laces he would astonish his wife with when he took her home, "his bride and his darling to be," to the old Cornish house by the sea.

Matters were in this train when Major Torrens brought his wife to London. Hugh's happy secret was let out before Ailie had come down from refreshing herself after her journey.

In answer to the major's inquiries, Hugh gave him a brief sketch of the history of his acquaintance with his *fiancée*. The major listened in silence until Hugh told him she was an actress.

"A what?"

And Major Torrens sat bolt upright in his chair, and stared at his friend, verily believing him to have gone mad.

"An actress."

"And you are going to marry a woman off the boards of a theatre—a painted puppet who has run the gauntlet of public admiration till she is proof against blushes and shyness, and all that makes a woman lovely, Hugh, you must be mad!"

"Stop, Torrens—you are speaking of my future wife," Hugh Tregarthen said, gravely. "Miss Benzonezi is a lady. Ladies can exist on the boards, whatever your prejudices may lead you to think. She is a pure, good girl. That she is nameless and friendless is no fault of hers. She will find name and friends in her husband's love."

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure," said the major, holding out his hand. "I might have known you would not choose unworthily; but there is such a glamour round stage heroines that a man is taken in before he has time to look about him. I thought you might have made the blunder of mistaking paste for gems, that was all!"

"If I had, I should have found it out before now," was the quiet answer. "If I did not know the woman I have chosen to be what a Tregarthen's wife should be, I should not have told you, nor mentioned her name in Ailie's hearing. She will like her, I'm sure."

"When shall we see her?"

"I will bring her to-morrow."

Ailie was quite herself again in the fresh atmosphere to which her husband had brought her. With Tregarthen she had left behind her all her fancies, and she evinced all a woman's interest in the little dish of romance he served up for her delectation. She declared it was quite like a novel, and "so nice of Cousin Hugh to fall in love with some one nobody knew."

"And she has no memories of her parents, poor thing," said the sympathizing Mrs. Torrens; "nothing to remind her of them? How lonely she must feel!"

"She has been well cared for, my dear. Her foster-mother idolizes her. Of her real mother she has one memento—a clumsy locket, almost as big as a plate, with her portrait in it. She wears it round her neck continually—out of sight, of course—and looks upon it as a sort of talisman. It seems the mother bade Mrs. Barton—that's the woman that brought her up—guard it as she guarded her life, for that it would establish Cora's identity, if any doubt were ever cast upon it. I can't see how, but Cora watches it accordingly."

"What is it like?"

"A common-looking gold locket with a glass front, nothing more, very thick and clumsy; but Cora will show it to you herself. You must try and like her, Ailie, for my sake."

"I am sure I shall—I should like any one you chose, Cousin Hugh. I want a friend to go out with that isn't stuck-up and fashionable, and all that sort of thing."

"Make your mind perfectly easy, Ailie. To-morrow you shall see her, and you will find how much she will learn to love you."

Cora was in no small trepidation at the idea of being introduced to any of Hugh's relations.

"I wish you hadn't any," she said, tearfully. "I'm afraid of them."

"You needn't be, my darling. My Cousin Ailie is the nicest girl in the world—an unaffected, pleasant creature; and her husband—well, he is the dearest friend I have in the world. You can't help liking them both."

"But they must be very rich to live here," she said, in dismay, as the carriage stopped at a handsome private hotel within a stone's throw of the Green Park.

"Pretty well for that—some ten thousand a year or so—but they don't mind knowing poor relations," he said, with a comical look on his face she could not comprehend. "You needn't be a bit frightened, you little goose. There's the major."

Major Torrens met them at the door, and greeted the trembling Cora in a manner that made her feel she was accepted as Hugh's betrothed at once. Major Torrens had a keen eye for a lady, and he felt at once that Cora Benzonezi was, as his friend had said, a lady—every inch of her. Her dark colored silk dress, velvet mantle and soft furs, were just what a lady would wear, and her bonnet and gloves were unexceptionable.

"My wife has been at the window for an hour looking for you," he said. "She is all impatience to see Mrs. Tregarthen that is to be."

He threw open the door of a handsome drawing-room as he spoke, and ushered her in, Hugh following, delighted that she had found such favor in the eyes of his friend.

"Here she is, Ailie," the major said. "Miss Benzonezi, allow me to introduce you to a new cousin—my wife."

Cora was charmed with the sweet, fair face, and the pretty grace of Ailie, who advanced to her with outstretched hands.

"I am so glad," she began, and put up her rosy lips to kiss the blushing girl.

All of a sudden she drew back, and a sick change came over her pretty face.

"The woman of my dream!" she gasped. "The woman who beats at the window of the library at Tregarthen! Save me from her, Harry, or I shall die!"

And before her husband could reach her, or Hugh or Cora could utter a word, she had fallen in a swoon at their feet!

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE TRYST ENDED.

Some dreams we have are nothing else but dreams,
Unnatural, and full of contradictions;
Yet others of our most romantic schemes
Are something more than fictions. *Hood.*

"What is the matter? What have I done?" asked Cora, in terror, as Major Torrens lifted the insensible Allie to the sofa. "Is the lady ill?"

"Yes, dear, that's it—she is ill. I ought to have told you so," Hugh replied, inwardly wishing his Cousin Allie and her fancies at the bottom of the sea. "Mrs. Torrens is very delicate, and her nerves are all unstrung. She will be better presently."

He led her from the room, and left her for a few minutes, while he went back to see what he could do. Allie's nerves had evidently received a severe shock. From the sofa she was carried to her bed, raving wildly of the woman of her dream, and imploring her husband to save her from the dreaded spectre. She described her over and over again, till both the major and Hugh began to feel uncomfortable, as they remembered how entirely the description tallied with Cora's personal appearance.

She had arched eyebrows and dark hair, parted on one side, and there was a mark on her hand which Mrs. Barton told him she had always had. But Cora had never been near Tregarthen—never anywhere in the West; and the more Hugh thought of it the more he wondered, without coming to any satisfactory conclusion on the matter.

Poor Cora was sorely distressed at the result of her introduction to Hugh's friends—the more so that every day Allie was reported to be very ill—so ill that her life was said to be in danger. At length her reason returned; but the hallucination about Hugh's bride-elect remained as strong as ever.

"The faces are identical," she persisted. "I know there is some mystery about this girl. If Hugh marries her, evil will come of it. There's a curse on Tregarthen, Harry, and she will work it out."

Major Torrens was very much annoyed at Allie's fancy. He liked Cora very much, and saw that Hugh was bound up in her. There was nothing for it but to take his wife abroad, and trust to chance and time to remove the strange idea she had got in her head; and thus it came about that Hugh's wedding was quieter than even he intended it to be, from the absence of his friend and his cousin. No one knew anything about it till, one morning, the whole fashionable world was electrified by the announcement of the marriage of "Captain Hugh Tregarthen, late of the 51st Regiment, to Miss Cora Benzonezi."

Who Miss Cora Benzonezi was no one had the least idea. She had never been heard of in the West-end, and there was no one who could throw any light on the mystery.

It mattered little to her now how people wondered. She was a happy wife, safe in her husband's love, and with more wealth at her command than her wildest dreams had ever pictured. Hugh had not frightened her, in the Lord Burleigh style, with any sudden display of his magnificence. He had let her learn it by degrees, and Tregarthen was all he had to show her now. They were in no hurry to go home from their honeymoon tour; it was so pleasant to go roaming about from one place of interest to another, doing just as they listed, seeing everything there was to be seen, and making all sorts of vague, pleasant plans for the future.

At Berlin they rested for a little while. Cora felt a strange interest in the place where her unknown father must have lived, and Hugh thought it barely possible that he might gather some information respecting her mother in the Prussian capital. He haunted the theatre assiduously, hunted up old playgoers and old actors, and succeeded in finding more than one who remembered the Cora Benzonezi of twenty years ago. She had been very popular evidently, and fly-blown, spotty portraits of her still existed in out-of-the-way shops and coffee-houses. No one could remember any one of her admirer who was more particularly attentive than any other; but one of the old *employés* of the theatre where she had been engaged, remembered that a young Englishman, resident in Berlin, had left the city about the same time that the dancer had suddenly broken her engagement and gone away. Their endeavors to find out his name proved fruitless; but Hugh Tregarthen persevered, and hunted through old records and papers till he almost gave up the search. At length he lit upon some old books of the theatre, in the possession of a man who had held a situation equivalent to acting manager in England. He had known Cora, he said, very well—indeed, he had loved her in a timid, hesitating sort of way, and had kept the records of triumphs as men will keep old memoranda that can give them nothing but pain to read.

From him Hugh Tregarthen gathered many little facts regarding the actress's habits—how she had lived out of town, in a very retired way, with an old woman, who died during her engagement; how she had suddenly left, to every one's dismay, leaving everything behind her, and not even claiming the salary due to her.

The old man rather liked the telling of all these bygone tales, and let Hugh Tregarthen look over his faded bills and yellow old books with the utmost complacency. Suddenly the young Cornishman came upon his own name—Tregarthen.

"What is this?" he asked.

It was a memorandum of boxes let in the theatre during the year of Cora's engagement, with the names of the persons who had taken.

"Ah, that was an Englishman," the old man said, suddenly, looking at his book. "He took a box, and he killed the gentleman who had the one next to it."

"Killed him?"

"Yes! They fought—no one knew what about—and the Englishman killed the other one night, just outside the city. Then he went away."

Hugh looked at the record with a strangely beating heart—

"*No. 24, grand tier, Julius Tregarthen.*"

Could it be possible that his uncle had had aught to do with the disappearance of the dancer whose child he had married?

He could find nothing further, and returned to Cora, perplexed and uncomfortable? Should he even find out anything? A strange idea possessed him that he should discover the secret of the Tregarthen mystery and the secret of his wife's birth at the same time.

"You look worried, dear," Cora said to him. "Have you discovered anything?"

"Nothing, save the fact that my uncle, Julius Tregarthen, was in Berlin the year of your mother's engagement. Suppose you should turn out to be my cousin as well as my wife, darling! We should be doubly united then."

"We couldn't be more so than we are. See what I have done, Hugh."

"What, dear?"

"Broken my locket—only the glass. Will you take it to be mended?"

"Yes. Can you part with it for so long?"

"I must. See it is coming all to pieces. I must have loosened the rim as well."

He took it from her hand, and in handling it the rim came quite off, letting the miniature fall into Cora's lap.

"Here is a piece of paper behind it," he said; "put there to keep it in its place, I suppose."

He unfolded it, and saw that it was covered with writing, in a cramped feeble hand. With no small astonishment he read—

"In the belief that my child may some day have to prove that she is born in lawful wedlock, I write this paper. I am Julius Tregarthen's wife. We were married in the Lutheran church at Spandau, by a clergyman called Paul Bergone. It was on the 28th of October, 1837. I write this, and hide it here, because my husband, believing me false, has taken from me by force the only record of our marriage, and the priest is dead. My child is honestly born. Though appearances were against me, I was true to him. He will know it some day. I am going to seek him; I know he lives in England. Heaven will point out the place to me, and show me the way to regain my husband's love. If he spurns me, I will appeal to the law to help me."

The fragment broke off abruptly, as though the writer had been disturbed, or overcome by emotion, and Hugh silently refolded it, his heart beating wildly at the strange words written therein.

They went to Spandau, but, alas! there was nothing to be learned there. The very name of the clergyman seemed to be forgotten, and the church had been burnt down a dozen years before.

"We may find something at Tregarthen," Hugh said, hopefully. "I don't believe I have explored half the nooks and corners of the old place yet, and Mr. Julius Tregarthen was continually writing, by all accounts. We may find some record of this escapade of his among papers that I have overlooked—who knows?"

At Paris, *en route* for home, they met Allie and her husband—the former in such renovated health that she could bear to meet Cora, and make acquaintance with her, though she still persisted in her extraordinary resemblance to the phantom, or fancy, which had so troubled her at Tregarthen.

"Harry says it must have been a prevision of Hugh's marriage," she said, gayly, dandling her boy. "Perhaps it was, but I hope I shall never see you look as that poor creature looked—so wild and worn and disheveled!"

A strange thought crossed Hugh that it might be Cora's mother in the flesh—not dead, but a wanderer, from some unexplained cause; but he did not utter it. He told the major and his wife of the writing in the locket, and how they were going to have a thorough search through the house for further evidence.

"I wish you two would come with us," he said. "I should like your help, if Allie has got over her fears."

"I have forgotten I ever had any," she replied. "If the Tregarthen air will suit baby, I'm ready to go. So long as no ghosts harm him, they are welcome to prowl as they choose."

Baby was paramount now; as long as nothing would injure him, she was content to go where they chose. So Major Torrens, Allie, and the young gentlemen who ruled their household went with Hugh and his bride to Tregarthen. A right joyous welcome they received. The people were glad to see the old house open once more, and received the dark-haired wife of their new lord with true Cornish zeal. Old Nancy Pengelly alone was reticent of praise or gladness at Cora's advent.

"Do you not see it, Mark? Are you blind?" she asked him, when, their first greeting over, they had retired to the privacy of their own room, to rest and chat.

"See what?"

"The new mistress—is it the dead woman come to life again, or is it another spirit—Heaven help us!—come to haunt the place, and bring us ill-luck? It's her face, Mark—her very face—and the brown streak on her hand, too!"

Mark said "Nonsense!" but he could not help noticing the strange likeness. All his fears of the supernatural vanished when his master sent for him and his wife to the library, and told him he had every reason to believe that their young mistress was the child of their dead master and a French lady, and asked him to aid him all he could in searching for papers and clearing up the mystery of what Mrs. Torrens had seen.

"My idea is that the poor lady is alive, and that there was some mistake about her death," he said, and Mark opened his round eyes very wide at the idea.

"Lord love you, sir, the woman we buried was dead enough, unless she has got out of her coffin. It can't be her as walks! Your good lady might be her come to life again—she's so like her."

Allie gave up the key of her pet monstrosity, as Hugh called the old cabinet, and they set to work to wade through the mass of papers it contained. Not a line appeared to throw any light upon the strange statement found in Cora's locket—no mention of wife or child. The cabinet was emptied, and its contents—papers of no consequence—turned out into the waste-paper baskets to be burnt.

"I wish you joy of it, Allie," Hugh said, as they stood regarding it somewhat ruefully, as a thing that had promised much, only to deceive them at last.

"It'll be beautiful when it's cleaned and varnished," Allie declared, "and all this rough wood planed. Here's a loose bit. Oh, how I have hurt my hand!"

"How, dear?"

"With a splinter. Look here!"

The blood was running down her white hand from an ugly scratch.

"Break the bit off, Harry, she said to her husband, "or some one else will hurt themselves as I have."

"It's a nasty bit," he said, pulling at it. "Why, the thing's coming to pieces!" as, with a snap and a crack, the whole of the back came out, revealing a space wherein lay books and papers. "Look here, Hugh—your work isn't ended yet."

A bundle of letters and a book were the first things that came to Hugh Tregarthen's hand, and he opened them. A hasty glance at the latter made him turn away from the rest to the embrasure of the window, and in a few moments he faced round to his wife, his lips very white with emotion, and placed the record of her mother's marriage with his uncle in her hand.

The book was a diary, recording every event of that brief time abroad which had wrought so much mischief. It told how he had met the dancer, and married her, and for a time believed this lower world to be Heaven in his infatuation. Then had come a doubt of her faith—a proof, as he believed, of her infidelity—the duel of which Hugh had heard at Berlin, and his flight from that city in disgust and horror. There were pitiful, beseeching letters from the deserted wife, addressed to a distant post-office—evidently the only clue she had to his residence—imploring a hearing, and offering proof of her innocence, which made the tears come into Cora's eyes as she read them; and there was a fragment in a tremulous hand, dated the very night of his death—December 24, 1838:—

"She has found me, as I feared she might some day. She has implored admittance—here, to Tregarthen—the home that has never yet been sullied by the presence of a wanton. I can hear her tapping at the window as I write; her voice sounds above the thunder, which howls its disapprobation of her presence here. 'Look for dole and wait for woe,' the old Cornish proverb says when we have thunderstorms in winter. What woe is she come to work? I am ill—her presence has upset me. Will she dare to proclaim who she is, and make a parade of her shame to my servants? My curses light upon her false face! Again! My brain burns—an iron hand is on my throat! Is it hers? No, for I hear her voice outside still. 'Julius—husband—for Heaven's sake!' Aye, call on Heaven, madam, and if it be as deaf as I, you will find small mercy there. I must hide the certificate—she shall not have it, to flaunt her offspring through the world as a pure, honestly-born Tregarthen. 'Twill puzzle her to find the secret of the old desk."

He must have thrust the packet where they found it, before he was seized with the mortal illness which bore him off, cruel and unrepenting to the last.

Was Cora Benzonezi guilty or innocent? Heaven alone can tell. Her child's tears fell fast over the long-hidden record of her misery and her blighted hopes.

"She shall have a nameless grave no longer, my darling," Hugh Tregarthen said to his wife. "She shall be laid in the Tregarthen vault, and her true name recorded there."

"But the slander, Hugh—the name your uncle brands me with!"

"We won't believe it, my darling," he said, gently. "Were it a thousand times true, you are my wife. My name is yours now. We will think of her gently, and at her best, as a wronged, suffering woman, who expiated all her faults by death. Some day we shall know all."

They were standing in the window, on the very spot where the wretched wife had died, when Hugh Tregarthen clasped her child to his heart and spoke loving words of her dead mother. The moon had risen, and shone upon Cora's upturned face, as her rosy lips sought her husband's in gratified response for his words.

Was it fancy, or did the four who stood there see a shadowy form in the moonlight moving over the memorable spot? Not wan and dishevelled now, but calm and still, with a face of peace. It might have been fancy, but they drew closer together instinctively as they gazed at the figure, as faint in its outline as that of the White Lady of Avenal.

As they looked it faded, and they saw nothing but the moonlit trees, and the gleaming sea below them, and the gentlemen rang for lights and talked of the effects of light and shade, and the wonderful pranks played by imagination; but Allie declared she had seen the woman of her former visions, and Cora, deep down in her heart, believed that her mother's face had looked upon her with a welcoming smile.

It may be that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy." No one can fathom the secrets of the unseen world; they serve for stories by the Christmas fire, and the old dames on the Cornish seaboard love to tell the tale of Julius Tregarthen's curious will, and to revert, with bated breath, to the episode of the denison of the spirit land who came unbidden to Tregarthen's Tryst.

THE END.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

IMMIGRATION.—There is no information that the closing year brings us which is looked for with more interest than the immigration returns. We have these before us, so far as they relate to the port of New York. In 1871, there landed at New York 229,639 foreigners, who had determined to make their homes in America. In 1872, down to December 26th, the number of arrivals was 291,217, an increase over last year of no less than 61,578. Of these 3,000 are reported as "destined" for Canada, but all the others expressed the determination of making their homes in the United States, more than one-half of them settling in the Middle States and New England, and nearly all the others going to the West; Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin being the favorite western destinations. Very few went South, 1,500 for Maryland and 300 for Kentucky being the only immigrants who bent their steps in that direction, but some of them have doubtless gone farther. As usual, of late years, Germany sent us the largest number of immigrants, the contribution of that empire being 115,415. The British Islands contributed 63,995 from Ireland, 34,581 from England, 9,100 from Scotland, 3,416 from Wales, and 151 from the "Isle of Man." Of Scandinavians there came 11,132 from Sweden, 6,406 from Norway, and 4,672 from Denmark. Austria sent 1,356, Bohemia 3,633, and Hungary 359. The Swiss numbered 4,496, the French 2,746, the Russians 4,137, and the Italians 5,853. There also came from Holland 3,472, from Belgium 625, and from Luxembourg 1,102. The Scandinavians are said to have preferred Wisconsin and Minnesota for their homes, whilst most of those who went to Illinois were Germans. The personal property in money and other effects brought by this grand accession of immigrants contributes largely toward overcoming the "balance of trade," which is otherwise against this country; and the addition of power they bring to the productive labor of the country is invaluable, especially when they go to the sections where land and everything else except labor is abundant.

THE GREAT STORM.—Judging from the reports that have come to us, the great storm of Christmas week, although it raged along the coast from below Hatteras northward, appears to have been severest along the coasts of New England, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. These shores have been literally strewn with wrecks, the heaviest loss being the ship Peruvian, wrecked on Cape Cod, with all on board—twenty-five persons. The adjacent seas also have been filled with disabled vessels, of which accounts are now being constantly received. There has not been for many years a storm which did so much damage at sea, and caused such great inconvenience on land. From the New England and Provincial coasts the storm appears to have moved northeasterly and easterly into the Atlantic, passing along the Gulf Stream, and it probably would not have been dissipated until its influences were felt on the shores of the British Islands and Northern Europe.

QUICK TELEGRAPHING.—The land wires and sea cables have now been extended so as to cover nearly three-fourths of the circumference of the globe. Were a cable laid under the Pacific, the circuit would be complete. Telegrams can now be sent from Hong Kong, by way of India and England, to San Francisco, and it was only this week that a telegram, leaving Hong Kong Tuesday morning, was received in New York Tuesday night, whence it could have been sent in a few minutes to San Francisco, had that city been its destination.

THE project of a canal across the Isthmus of Darien is being revived. Russia, England, Germany and Austria are now in the field as competitors. While a European vessel dodges the Cape of Good Hope, an American ship must brave the storms of Cape Horn before spreading its wings on the Pacific. This can be avoided by a ship canal across the Isthmus.

☞ A prominent member of a church in Kingston, N. Y., the other Sunday, in a fit of abstraction, went early to church and took a seat in the pew ahead of his own. The next person that came in, knowing that his pew was the one ahead of the prominent member's, also sat in the wrong pew. Every one that came in afterwards pursued a similar line of argument, and, in consequence that morning everybody on that side of the church was in the wrong pew. The man who occupied the front seat thought "his pew" didn't look natural, but as Brother B. was just behind him, it wasn't possible he himself could be mistaken.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Popoff is the most unpleasantly suggestive name of one of the leading physicians of St. Petersburg.

☞ The editor of the Wabash Sentinel wants to know if "the man who sent him a challenge to fight a duel means business," or whether "his buzzard soul laughs at the ghastly joke."

☞ A Macon man who fell over a Thomas cat in the entry on a very dark night, and afterwards attempted to choke the animal without tying its legs, will, as soon as he recovers, write an essay to show that the common house cat, especially the male variety, is far, very far, from being domesticated.

☞ Our nautical contributor wishes to know if Tom Thumb, having become a yachtman, is to be allowed to revive the torture of the Inquisition by preparing hands for the Thumb's crew?—*World.*

☞ A worthy farmer in Georgia, who was carried home on a litter the other day, solemnly asserts that nothing but a twenty-ton anchor can hold a sorrel mule down to the earth after she has stepped in a yellow-jacket's nest.—*Philada. Bulletin.*

☞ A promising young citizen of Clay county, who was thoughtless enough to throw the bootjack at his mother-in-law, is deeply impressed with the idea that there is nothing so sharp and sudden for removing the hair from a man's head as a potato-grater. He now occupies apartments in an out-house.

☞ The muse of America is a curious bird, and our popular ballads are enough to wring the soul of a patriot. Here is one concerning "Do not slam the gate, Harry," and another which opens with this touching bit of realism:

"Take off your boots at the porch, Jim,
For the old man don't sleep very sound."

☞ The boy that recommended a few drops of panegyric on sugar for the child of disquietude, has his match in another, who, after successfully spelling "chicanery," defined it to be a "large coop to raise chickens."

☞ Despite the large amount of rubber goods destroyed by the Boston fire, steak remains at 22 cents.

☞ The Delaware Indians, in New York, live in frame houses, wear cut-away coats and stand-up collars, fail in business and compromise at fifty cents on the dollar, and are getting quite civilized.

☞ A South American paper denies that the monkeys are dying of yellow fever. Their descendants in other parts of the world will be much relieved by the intelligence.

☞ A dog with two tails was seen in Taunton the other day. One belonged to an ox, and was carried in the mouth of the canine.

☞ Emmeline—"Dear me, that is a charming song; it's quite new to me! Have you ever heard it before, Algy?" Algernon—"Yaas, think I have—one of Arthur Sullivan's, I believe—something about lies—The snow white lies, or The white snow lies, or The snow lies white—I don't recollect which, and it's all the same!"

☞ A man at the fire in Skowhegan, Me., tried an experiment which is not worth repeating, as it settled the point involved. He stopped a box with his head, which had been thrown from the third-story window (the box, not the head), and was very badly hurt. So was the box.

☞ It cost a Topekaman $39.27 to kiss another man's wife. The twenty-seven cents were added by the judge for winking at the injured husband of the kissed woman.

☞ A pumpkin-pie, ten feet in diameter and four feet deep, was the chief feature of a California dinner, recently. The enjoyment of the guests was marred somewhat by a child falling into the pie and drowning before their eyes.

☞ A German, of Pittsburg, by the name of Meyers, engaged to Miss Kate Dressel, failed to put in an appearance at the important hour, when the bonny Kate was arrayed in cloudy bridal robes. An officer found at his residence the following card: "Mr. Meyers's compliments. Not at home. Gone to Germany."

☞ A Frenchman lately recovered $2000 from some friends who cut off his moustache in a drunken escapade. This is a pretty good price for a moustache. There are many young men in this town who have been struggling with a moustache for years, and if they were to receive $2000 apiece for their hirsute appendages it would be equal to about $500 per hair.

☞ All the chicken-stealing done in Sacramento is carried on by one Chinaman, who is an adept at the business. That is cheap labor, indeed! Imagine the responsibility of a man with the chicken-stealing for a whole city on his hands.

☞ A Chicago girl, whose clothes were all in flames, was saved without a blister by the promptness with which her cavalier removed her burning garment. A more bashful man would have stood still and let her fry.

☞ Daniel Boone's axe, rifle, aged sister and numerous terrapins are travelling separately through the newspapers.

☞ The saloon-keepers of Dubuque are the most soulless wretches on earth. They flatly refused when Mr. Hammond, the revivalist, mildly requested them to empty their whisky in the gutters and close up shop.

☞ We notice a pleasing little instance of the advantages of co-operative labor. In a Western college five students kept batchelor's hall together. They usually have hot cakes for breakfast, and this is the way in which they are prepared: No. 1 builds the fire, No. 2 mixes the batter, No. 3 greases the griddle, No. 4 adjusts the batter to the same, No. 5 takes off the cakes. Then the whole party affectionately co-operate in devouring the result of their joint labors. Here the plan will work no farther, for every man has to digest on his own personal responsibility.

☞ The Churchman sympathizes somewhat with the exclamation of the man who, reading the large heading of a newspaper column: "Wife Killed by Her Husband," exclaimed, "I'm so glad; I've been tired to death by these eternal husband poisonings."

☞ Two men, who stole a ride on a Texas freight train, were locked in and switched off the track at a way station, and had to remain in their close quarters for ninety-six hours without food or water, and at the end of that time were imprisoned as vagrants.

☞ The editor of a Kansas paper hung himself, lately, and left a note for his foreman telling him to go and chop wood if he would be happy.

☞ A Michigan man lately had his head cut into by a circular saw as far as the brains ought to be. As none were found, the top of his skull was spiked on again and he is recovering.

☞ The man who put a lighted pipe into his coat-tail pocket, and sat down on it, afterward explained that he thought the weather was moderating very suddenly.

☞ In Upshur county, Texas, 10,000 Chinamen are at work on the Texas Pacific Railroad.

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WIT AND HUMOR.

HOW I ESCAPED BEING KILLED IN A DUEL.

BY MARK TWAIN.

The only merit I claim for the following narrative is that it is a true story. It has a moral at the end of it, but I claim nothing on that, as it is merely thrown in to curry favor with the religious element.

After I had reported a couple of years on the Virginia City (Nevada) Daily Enterprise, they promoted me to be editor-in-chief—and I lasted just a week, by the watch. But I made an uncommonly lively newspaper while I *did* last, and when I retired I had a duel on my hands, and three horse-whippings promised me. The latter I made no attempt to collect, however; this history concerns only the former. It was the old "flush times" of the silver excitement, when the population was wonderfully wild and mixed; everybody went armed to the teeth, and all slights and insults had to be atoned for with the best article of blood your system could furnish. In the course of my editing I made trouble with a Mr. Lord, editor of the rival paper. He flew up about some little trifle or other that I said about him—I do not remember now what it was. I suppose I called him a thief, or a body-snatcher, or an idiot, or something like that. I was obliged to make the paper readable, and I could not fail in my duty to a whole community of subscribers merely to save the exaggerated sensitiveness of an individual. Mr. Lord was offended, and replied vigorously in his paper. Vigorously means a great deal when it refers to a personal editorial in a frontier newspaper. Duelling was all the fashion among the upper classes in that country, and very few gentlemen would throw away an opportunity of fighting one. To kill a person in a duel caused a man to be even more looked up to than to kill two men in the ordinary way. Well, out there, if you abused a man, and that man did not like it, you had to call him out and kill him; otherwise you would be disgraced. So I challenged Mr. Lord, and I did hope he would not accept; but I knew perfectly well that he did not want to fight, and so I challenged him in the most violent and implacable manner. And then I sat down and suffered and suffered till the answer came. All our boys—the editors—were in our office, "helping" me in the dismal business, and talking about duels, and discussing the code with a lot of aged ruffians who had had experience in such things, and altogether there was a loving interest taken in the matter, which made me unspeakably uncomfortable. The answer came—Mr. Lord declined. Our boys were furious, and so was I—on the surface.

I sent him another challenge, and another and another; and the more he did not want to fight, the bloodthirstier I became. But at last the man's tone changed. He appeared to be waking up. It was becoming apparent that he was going to fight me after all. I ought to have known how it would be—he was a man who could never be depended upon. Our boys were exultant. I was not, though I tried to be.

It was now time to go out and practice. It was the custom there to fight duels with navy six-shooters at fifteen paces—load and empty till the game for the funeral was secured. We went to a little ravine just outside of town, and borrowed a barn-door for a target—borrowed it of a gentleman who was absent—and we stood this barn-door up, and stood a rail on end against the middle of it to represent Lord, and put a squash on top of the rail to represent his head. He was a very tall, lean creature, the poorest sort of material for a duel—nothing but a line shot could "fetch" him, and even then he might split your bullet. Exaggeration aside, the rail was, of course, a little too thin to represent his body accurately, but the squash was all right. If there was any intellectual difference between the squash and his head, it was in favor of the squash.

Well, I practised and practised at the barn-door, and could not hit it; and I practised at the rail, and could not hit that; and I tried hard for the squash, and could not hit the squash. I would have been entirely disheartened, but that occasionally I crippled one of the boys, and that encouraged me to hope.

At last we began to hear pistol-shots near by, in the next ravine. We knew what that meant! The other party were out practising, too. Then I was in the last degree distressed; for of course those people would hear our shots, and they would send spies over the ridge, and the spies would find my barn-door without a wound or a scratch, and that would simply be the end of me—for of course that other man would immediately become as bloodthirsty as *I* was. Just at this moment a little bird, no larger than a sparrow, flew by, and lit on a sage-bush about thirty paces away; and my little second, Steve Gillis, who was a matchless marksman with a pistol—much better than I was—snatched out his revolver, and shot the bird's head off! We all ran to pick up the game, and sure enough, just at this moment, some of the other duellists came reconnoitring over the little ridge. They ran to our group to see what the matter was; and when they saw the bird, Lord's second said:

"That was a splendid shot. How far off was it?"

Steve said, with some indifference:

"Oh, no great distance. About thirty paces."

"Thirty paces! Heavens alive, who did it?"

"*My* man—Twain."

"The mischief he did! Can he do that often?"

"Well—yes. He can do it about—well—about four times out of five."

I knew the little rascal was lying, but I never said anything. I never told him so. He was not of a disposition to invite confidences of that kind, so I let the matter rest. But it was a comfort to see those people look sick, and see their under-jaws drop, when Steve made these statements. They went off and got Lord, and took him home; and when we got home, half an hour later, there was a note saying that Mr. Lord peremptorily declined to fight!

It was a narrow escape. We found out afterward that Lord hit *his* mark thirteen times in eighteen shots. If he had put those thirteen bullets through me, it would have narrowed my sphere of usefulness a good deal—would have well nigh closed it, in fact. True, they could have put pegs in the holes, and used me for a hat-rack; but what is a hat-rack to a man who feels he has intellectual powers? I would scorn such a position.

I have written this true incident of my personal history for one purpose, and one purpose only—to warn the youth of the day against the pernicious practice of duelling, and to plead with them to war against it. If the remarks and suggestions I am making can be of any service to Sunday-school teachers, and newspapers interested in the moral progress of society, they are at liberty to use them, and I shall even be grateful to have them widely disseminated, so that they may do as much good as possible. I was young and foolish when I challenged that gentleman, and I thought it was very fine and very grand to be a duellist, and stand upon the "field of honor." But I am older and more experienced now, and am inflexibly opposed to the dreadful custom. I am glad, indeed, to be enabled to lift up my voice against it. I think it is a bad, immoral thing. I think it is every man's duty to do everything he can to *discourage* duelling. I always do now; I discourage it upon every occasion.

If a man were to challenge me *now*—now that I can fully appreciate the iniquity of that practice—I would go to that man, and take him by the hand, and lead him to a quiet, retired room—and kill him.

A WINTER'S NIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

"How do I look, Mabel?"

Kitty Mason turned from the mirror, in which she had been carefully surveying herself, to ask this question of her Cousin Mabel.

"Isn't that a needless question?" smiled Mabel. "You can see for yourself."

"Ah, but I am a little vain, you know—and you have such exquisite taste. I want you to give me your honest opinion."

"Well, then, honestly, Kitty, I think that the gallant who can resist your charms to-night must be hard-hearted indeed. Your cheeks are aglow, your eyes sparkle, your hair is a mass of shimmering gold, and your dress is perfection itself."

"You sweet little thing!" exclaimed Kitty, throwing her arms around her cousin's neck. "I'll introduce you to that handsome new clerk, Mabel, to pay for this."

"Thank you," said Mabel. "But you need not take the trouble, as I am altogether too plain to attract even Mr. Vassar's clerk."

"And you think I am pretty enough to charm the merchant himself?"

A shadow passed over Mabel's face, but she answered, calmly:

"Who could doubt it? You are certainly the prettiest girl in the village, and Mr. Vassar is already very attentive to you. I even think he is in love with you."

"Do you? Oh, I am so glad. Mr. Vassar is very distinguished-looking, and they say he is very wealthy."

"Is that the reason you want to marry him?" asked Mabel, gravely.

"That? what?" retorted Kitty, pettishly.

"Do you like him merely because he is wealthy? If he were a poor man, wouldn't you like him just the same?"

"What a question!" laughed Kitty. "Why, you silly goose, you know very well that I wouldn't marry a poor man if he were as handsome as Apollo himself."

"Not if he possessed goodness and nobility of soul?"

"Not if he possessed the virtues of a saint."

"Then, Kitty, you are unworthy of any good man's love."

Kitty Mason laughed, and glanced complacently at her reflection in the mirror.

"Spare your heroics, Mabel, they will not have any effect on me," she said. "With all your romantic talk, I think you would a little rather marry a rich man than a poor one—wouldn't you, now, cousin?"

"I do not despise wealth; I know the comforts which it can procure; but I will never marry a man whom I do not love because he is rich, nor refuse one whom I do love because he is poor."

"But John Vassar is well enough, aside from his riches, isn't he?"

"John Vassar is a man of whose love any woman might well be proud," replied Mabel Mason, with a slight tremor in her low, sweet voice.

The cousins were of nearly the same age, but totally dissimilar in appearance. Kitty was small, with a petite, graceful figure, and a fair, dimpled, wonderfully pretty face. Her blue eyes laughed and sparkled, and her yellow hair crinkled and curled all over her vain little head, and fell down over her white shoulders in shining rings and coils. Yes, she was very beautiful; but her red lips had a haughty curl, and her nose had a fashion of elevating itself at times, which detracted not a little from her good looks. She was the petted child of indulgent parents; no wonder that she grew up to womanhood with an exalted opinion of her own merits.

Her Cousin Mabel was tall, slender, and almost plain in appearance. Her large black eyes were calm and thoughtful, her brow broad and white, crowned with waves of dark-brown hair. Her cheeks were pale, with none of those "rose and snow" tints which made her cousin so beautiful. Her principal charms were a small, childish, sensitive mouth, and a soft, exquisitely modulated voice. She was an orphan, with a small fortune in her own right; but this last fact was known only to her uncle's family, and she was looked upon as a "poor cousin," and considered of but little account in Asheville's social world.

There was to be a ball that night at the house of Mr. Crawford, a gentleman farmer who lived a mile outside of the village limits, and it was for this festive occasion that the cousins were preparing. Kitty was arrayed in all the wonders of a modern fashionable toilet, but she looked graceful and charming still, for she never could look otherwise. Mabel was plainly but richly dressed, without an ornament of any kind. Her pale face was very lovely, however, and mirrored the thoughts of a pure and cultivated mind.

The jingle of sleigh-bells was heard on the street. Kitty rushed to a window and looked out with an eager face.

"Mr. Vassar has come," she said, smiling. "Just look, Mabel, what a splendid turn-out he has; those blacks of his are magnificent. How I shall enjoy riding behind them when I am Mrs. Vassar."

"You seem to admire the horses more than the man," replied Mabel, a little contemptuously.

"Oh, well, I don't pretend to understand your high-flown notions. But we mustn't keep the gentleman waiting."

Donning their cloaks and furs, the young ladies entered the parlor, where Mr. Vassar was listening patiently to Mrs. Mason's insipid twaddle.

John Vassar was a man of six-and-twenty. Tall, erect, and stately, with a thoughtful brow and steel-blue eyes, his mouth was delicate and tender, and his smile as sweet as a woman's. He was one of Nature's noblemen—alike fitted to conquer in the battle-field, or in the courts of love. More than one pair of bright eyes looked wistfully upon him; but with a blindness peculiar to his sex, he passed by those who were worthy of him, and gave his heart to the silliest flirt in the village. But Kitty Mason was very pretty, and that is the one thing desirable in a woman.

"You are ready to go, I see, ladies," said Mr. Vassar, after the usual salutations were over. The cousins bowed their assent, and descended to the street, where Mr. Vassar handed them into his elegant sleigh, and urged his spirited blacks to a swift trot.

The night was clear and cold. Innumerable stars twinkled in the dark-blue sky, and a crescent moon shed a weird, silvery light over the snow-clad, frosty earth. The road was well-trodden and smooth. The sleigh almost flew over the ground, and its occupants soon arrived at Mr. Crawford's hospitable mansion.

There was a goodly number of young people assembled in the "parlor" of the house, all intent on enjoying themselves to the utmost. When the cousins entered there was a great sensation. Kitty was at once declared the belle of the evening, and Mr. Vassar was the centre toward which the eyes of the lovely ladies turned.

Soon the dancing commenced, to the sound of the "flute, violin and bassoon." Kitty was in constant demand as a partner, and her blue eyes and floating curls, her smiling lips and coquettish glances, made sad havoc with the hearts of the young men. Mabel, who, seldom danced, sought a seat in an out-of-the-way corner, where she watched the gay throng with sad, dreary eyes. She saw her cousin dancing with John Vassar—she saw his arm around her slender waist—she saw him gazing lovingly down upon the laughing blushing face upraised to his. With a little sigh, she passed her hand across her eyes, and a tear fell upon her white palm. Poor girl! she loved "not wisely, but too well;" she had given her heart, unasked, to the man who would soon be her cousin's husband.

When the sun is in the Heavens, we cannot see the stars. Mabel was not without admirers; she tried to tear this hopeless passion from her bosom, to bestow her affections where they would have been returned; but in vain. Love—true love—cannot be governed by the will. And in such natures as hers there is but one love in a lifetime.

Presently Kitty, breathless and exhausted, came and sat down by her cousin's side.

"Why don't you dance, Mabel?" she asked.

"I would rather look on. And the men don't often ask me to dance," laughed Mabel.

"That's queer. Why, I've danced every time—and four times with Mr. Vassar. He seems very devoted to-night—I actually think he will propose."

"Indeed!" said Mabel, turning away her head.

"Yes—and I mean to—Listen! What is Harry Crawford saying to that fellow?"

Harry Crawford, the host's son, a young man just returned from college, stood a few steps in front of the cousins, talking to a friend in a confidential tone.

"Yes," he said, "Vassar is a good fellow enough, and Kitty Mason flirts with him a good deal—but I don't think she will marry him."

"Why not?" asked the other. "Vassar is handsome, and the richest man in town—"

"There's where you're wrong," laughed young Crawford. "He isn't worth to-night, clear of debts, a thousand dollars. He went into a big speculation with a friend of his in New York, but the bubble has bursted, and they are both ruined."

"Is this true? I never heard a word of it before."

"There isn't a doubt of it. But let's hunt our partners. I am going to dance the next time with that adorable little Miss Kitty."

Young Crawford and his friend walked away without perceiving their astonished listeners.

"It's lucky I heard this," said Kitty. "Of course I will not accept Mr. Vassar *now*."

"Surely you cannot be so heartless!" exclaimed Mabel, indignantly.

"Can't I?" sneered Kitty, rising. "At least I will not be such a fool as to marry a man who isn't worth a thousand dollars. I'm going to dance with Harry Crawford. He is a very good-looking boy, and will come in for the lion's share of his father's property. By-by, cousin; can't you console Mr. Vassar?"

With this cruel speech, and a musical laugh Kitty danced away. A moment later Mabel saw her waltzing with Harry Crawford. And so skilfully did she use her eyes and her tongue, that the conceited young collegian was sure that she was dead in love with him; which fancy raised him to the seventh heaven of bliss.

Mr. Vassar, of course, was not particularly pleased with such proceedings. The girl was almost his promised wife, and he considered that his arms alone should embrace that lovely form. So, when the waltz came to an end, and Kitty stood alone for a moment by a window, looking out on the snowy, moonlit landscape, he approached her and said:

"You will dance this waltz with me, won't you, Kitty?"

"I am engaged," answered Kitty, coldly, and without turning her head.

John Vassar was astonished. "Well, the next time then?" he asked.

"Excuse me, Mr. Vassar, but I don't think I shall dance any more."

Mr. Vassar's face grew red, then pale. He bent his head and looked straight into the girl's eyes. Kitty blushed, and turned away her face.

"What do you mean, Miss Mason?" he said. "You refuse to dance with me—you speak to me as if I were a stranger. How have I offended you? I thought you liked me, Kitty—that you cared for me as I do for you."

"You were mistaken then. I do *not* care for you, except as a friend."

"Are you in earnest?" asked Mr. Vassar, very calm and very pale.

"Quite in earnest. I hope you will say no more about it, Mr. Vassar."

"Very well." John Vassar turned away, and meeting Nettie Crawford, Harry's sister, he asked her to dance with him, and the young lady gladly complied. He was too proud to show the pain and disappointment which he felt; so he danced with every girl in the room, including Mabel Mason. The latter suspected what had happened from the paleness of his face; and although she sympathized with him deeply—and knew by her own heart how keen were the pangs of unrequited love—she could not help feeling a thrill of joy that he was not going to marry her heartless cousin. Perhaps a faint hope that *she* might win his love sprang up in her bosom. At any rate as she floated through the bewildering dance, with his arm around her waist, his manly face close to her own, she felt a happiness which she had never experienced before. Her eyes brightened, and the rich blood mounted to her cheeks. John Vassar, as he looked at her, wondered how he could ever have thought her plain. She was absolutely beautiful, and her dancing was simply perfect. If—and here the young man indulged in a very strange train of reflections, considering that, a moment before, he had fancied himself broken hearted. The heart, in the majority of people, is a very tough organ, and soon recovers from apparently serious injuries.

Toward midnight the party broke up. Mr. Vassar offered his arm to Kitty to conduct her to his sleigh, but the young lady declared that she was not going home until the next day.

"But your mother will think strange of this, Kitty," remonstrated Mabel.

"I have a terrible headache, and I don't think it prudent to go out in the cold night air. Nettie Crawford says that I must stay with her until to-morrow, when Harry will drive me home in his sleigh."

"An excellent plan," said Mr. Vassar, grimly. "Doubtless 'Harry' will be delighted with the arrangement, and I assure you that I am. Come, Mabel, let us go."

He bowed and smiled graciously, and left the room with Mabel clinging to his arm. Kitty watched them with flashing eyes and crimson cheeks. She had expected her lover to be terribly piqued and angry, and instead of that he was actually glad to be rid of her presence. Was this a sample of man's devotion and constancy? She resolved to get up a desperate flirtation with Harry Crawford, and marry him at the earliest opportunity. Mr. Crawford was one of the wealthiest farmers in the county, and his son, with his splendid education, was likely to make his mark in the world.

The moon was down, but the stars gave light enough to render surrounding objects plainly visible. The air was intensely cold, and a keen, searching wind blew from the North. Mr. Vassar's steeds were very eager to start, and it required all their owner's strength and skill to control them. His was the last sleigh on the road leading to the village, and the others were out of sight. The homeward ride bade fair to prove a lonely and a silent one. Mr. Vassar was too much occupied with bitter reflections to talk; and Mabel, knowing what those reflections must be, was silent also.

The spirited horses reared and pranced dangerously under the tightly-drawn lines. They were passing through a narrow belt of woods; to the right was a thicket of shrubs, to the left a steep bank or incline; the road at that point was very narrow. Suddenly a rabbit darted out of the bushes, and scurried across the road. The horses gave a snort of terror, and swerved quickly to the left, jerking the sleigh off the road; it was overturned, and the next moment its occupants were lying in the snow ten feet below the road. The horses, finding themselves unchecked, dashed furiously away toward the village, their bells ringing wildly through the frosty air.

Mabel was uninjured by the tumble. She sprang to her feet, and looked around for her companion. He was lying still and motionless, with his white face upturned to the shining stars. Mabel uttered a little scream, and sank on her knees by his side.

"Oh, John!" she cried, "Oh, John, are you hurt? Open your eyes—speak to me!"

No answer. Not a limb of the stately form moved.

"He is dead!" she moaned. "Oh, God, he is dead, and he will never know how I loved him! Oh, my darling, live for my sake—or look up and kiss me once—just once—before you die."

Sobbing, she bent over him, and pressed her lips to his in one long, passionate, despairing kiss. I think such love as hers might have recalled a spirit flattering on the borders of another world. But John Vassar was not seriously injured. He was only stunned by the fall, and that sweet kiss from warm and loving lips revived him.

"Mabel," he said, opening his eyes, "do you really love me?"

"Oh, John, you are not hurt! you are not going to die!" said Mabel, rapturously.

"Not if you love me; but if you are as heartless as your cousin, I do not wish to live."

"Ah, but I do love you; I have loved you since I first saw you, but you have never cared for me."

"I love you now, my true-hearted darling. I have been stupidly blind for a long time, but my eyes are opened at last. This is a queer place and position for a proposal. I know—but if you will promise me to be my wife, I will get up, if not; I think I will depart from such a miserable world."

"Oh, John," laughed Mabel, but with tears in her voice, "I would have given you that promise long ago, if you had asked me."

Mr. Vassar scrambled to his feet, and hunted up his hat.

"You may wonder how a man can change his mind so quickly," he said, "but I tell you, Mabel, that I love you now ten times more than ever I loved that silly Kitty! How fortunate that she jilted me."

"Kitty would have married you if she had not heard about your losing your fortune."

"Losing my fortune!" The young man paused half way up the steep bank to look at the girl's happy face. "What do you mean, Mabel? I haven't lost any fortune."

"We—Kitty and I—heard Harry Crawford tell a friend to-night that you had lost all your fortune in a speculation with a friend in New York."

"That was a pretty story. Why, I haven't a friend in New York, and I have never been engaged in any doubtful speculations. And so, little girl, you were willing to marry me, when you thought me a poor man?"

"I loved you, John—not your money," replied Mabel, softly.

"My unselfish Mabel! If it wasn't so slippery here, I would kiss you——Hello! yonder come some of our friends to look for us."

Mr. Vassar's runaway team came up with some of the other sleighs near the village; and guessing at once what had happened, two or three young men hastened back to look for the unlucky pair, whom they found safe and sound, however, and apparently very happy. Not very long afterward there was a quiet wedding at Mr. Mason's, and the bridegroom seemed to be the happiest man in the world.

Great was Kitty Mason's chagrin when she found that John Vassar had not lost his fortune at all—that the tale was a mere idle rumor. But she consoled herself by marrying Harry Crawford, and she is now waiting impatiently for her father-in-law to die, that her husband may take possession of the "lion's share" of the old gentleman's property.

MAKING AN ASS OF HIMSELF.

Dr. Birch (to hopelessly inattentive pupil).—"Did you hear what I said? (silence) You're a stupid donkey! Don't you hear me? (silence and pause) Come, what did I say?"
Pupil (inspired).—"You're a stupid donkey, sir!"

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double rates* on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

MARCIA, (Philada., Pa.), says "I would like you to answer a few questions for me. 1st. To what religious sect does Jean Lenis belong? 2nd. What is the meaning of the word Koh-i-noor? 3rd. How do you pronounce Lucca? Froude? 4th. What do you think of my grammar and writing?" 1st. We do not know. 2d. It means "Hill of Lustre," or, more grandiloquently, "Mountain of Light." 3d. Pronounce Lew-ka. Prood. 4th. Your grammatical construction is correct, and your writing good.

W. H. W., (Cairo, Pa.,) writes: "Please answer the following questions in your correspondents' columns: Has 'Lippard's Legends of the Revolution' ever been published in book form, and what did Marshal Bazaine do that he was court-martialed for, and very much oblige your little friend." We can obtain Lippard's Legends for you, price $1.50 in paper, $2 in cloth. Marshal Bazaine was accused of having surrendered the city of Metz to the Germans without there being any military necessity for his doing so. There is great diversity of opinion on this matter among the French people.

GREEN HILL, (Franklin, Ky.,) asks: "Is it proper for a lady to keep the arm of a gentleman on entering a church, until she is shown to a seat? Or should she relinquish it at the entrance of the church?" It is not customary, and custom usually settles the question of propriety in such matters. The object in taking a gentleman's arm is protection or support. The former would certainly not be needed within the doors of a church; nor would the latter, unless in exceptional cases. To retain the arm then would appear as if intended to call attention to the intimate relations of the parties, a result which any lady would wish to avoid.

GEORGE G. asks: "1st. How old is the earth? 2d. How many newspapers are there published in the United States? 3d. Can you give me a receipt for cream candy? 4th. How many subscribers to the Post would be enough to get a Novelty hand stamp for full name and address? 5th. Is Telegraphing learned easily? and how long would it take, and how much would it cost? 6th. How is my handwriting?" 1st. That is, as yet, an open question. Sir William Thompson says it cannot be more than 100,000,000 years old, but others doubt his conclusions. 2d. about 6,000. 3d. We do not know how it is made. Perhaps some of our readers can give a receipt for it. 4th. We will ascertain in a week or so. 5th. No. It is rather difficult. How long it would take and how much cost, depend on the aptitude of the person. 6th. Very poor.

A. F. (Amerville) writes: "As a constant reader of your paper I wish to ask you a few questions: 1st. On what finger should a lady wear an engagement ring? 2d. A young gentleman is in love with me, and I thought that he was sincere, but he left me and has been paying attention to another lady. She discarded him and he wants to come back. Shall I let him come or not? 3d. When a gentleman takes a lady to a dance, should he dance with her the first time he dances or not? 4th. Would it be proper to accept the company of a young gentleman, knowing that he is engaged to another lady?" 1st. It is usually worn like the marriage ring, on the third finger of the left hand—though some say it should be worn on the first. 2d. If you are willing to forgive and take him to your heart again, and he wants to be taken there, we are content. Even the magnetic needle sometimes turns aside from the pole, in obedience to some new attraction, but eventually returns to its first love. You had better perhaps forgive your repentant lover for his first escapade. 3d. Yes. Politeness demands that both the lady and the gentleman should consider each other's presence before accepting other requests. 4th. You—notice you use the word company in the sense of considering him a suitor. An engagement bond should be a chain of roses, not an iron fetter. The lady should not be so selfish and so lacking in confidence in her betrothed, as to wish him to give up all other acquaintance.

H. S. M. writes: "1st. What is the retail price of the work entitled Life of Daniel Boone? You advertise it, with others, at the usual retail price, but do not say what it is. I wish to get the book, but do not know what sum to send. Please inform me. 2d. What system is that which teaches the art of self-improvement in writing? Can it be purchased at any of the bookstores and what is the cost? I am a teacher, and while teaching my scholars to write would like to improve myself." 1st. $1.50. 2d. All the systems of writing profess to be adapted to self-improvement. We do not know which one you refer to. Practice, on any system, is the main moment of improvement.

ANNIE P., (Woodstown, N. J.,) writes: "Knowing you are a dictionary, who most accurately answers all the questions of love-lorn men and women, I, as a poor, persecuted woman, wish to ask you a question which very materially concerns my happiness, and I be just this: I am fat. You may think that is nothing, but to me it is a great deal. I no sooner get my clothes all altered sufficiently to get into and have room to breathe, than I have to begin over again and make another change in my wardrobe, and so it has been for the last six months, rip and sew until I declare I will be like Topsy, and wear a coffee bag with holes for the arms, and stay in it till I fill it out; and then I could make another one. I am not the only one who has to suffer from this undue increase, for I am tormented with a husband who looks at the chairs with a fearful countenance whenever I sit down, thinking that their poor weak legs will soon give way under the heavy burden of his better half. Friends say, 'Starve yourself.' I have tried that, but it don't pay. Now, my dear Post, you who can solve all questions, tell me what I am to do about it, that I may become shadowy, transparent and most beautifully lean." We should be happy to answer your conundrum if we could only see our way clear to a solution of the difficulty. It might be advisable to try for awhile the diet that the Irishman gave his horse. Paddy thought that the equine race would be very profitable if it were not for their voracious appetites, and that he would gradually accustom his horse to live without eating. He succeeded in getting it down to one oat a day, but at this point the unreasonable creature died, just as its master was about making a great discovery for the benefit of the world. As you say you prefer not to venture on so low a diet, suppose you try the Banting system, eating meat, but very little bread, vegetables, milk or puddings. Our extensive transatlantic cousin brought himself within reasonable proportions by this system, and you may have the same good fortune. As for your husband he has no right to complain, for some, from your statement, to have got so much more than he bargained for, that he should feel rich on the surprise, and gratefully set himself to strengthen all his chairs, and order dry goods by the furlong, in order to sustain and clothe his weighty responsibility.

J. S. B., (Lake, Miss.,) writes: "You will confer a favor by answering a few questions for me. 1st. Did John Wesley intend to form a new church, or only to reform the Episcopal church? 2d. Did Coke write the life of Wesley? If so, can you procure me a copy and at what price? 3d. Did he believe in and practice immersion, and baptise an infant in that way in Georgia? 4th. Could I procure all the different editions of the Methodist Discipline, from the formation of the first societies to the present time, and what would they cost me? 5th. How is Kerosene pronounced? 6th. Are ——, compass and mathematical instrument makers of Troy, N. Y., still there at work? and whom could I address in New York city as compass maker? 7th. What do you think of my handwriting?" 1st. He intended to reform the Episcopal church, but was eventually forced to found a new one. 2d. We know of no such life. You, perhaps, refer to the life by Adam Clarke. 3d. Immersion was not his ordinary mode of baptising, but it is permitted by his church, in case any one prefers to be immersed. He may have baptized a Georgian infant in that way. We do not know. 4th. You will have to inquire of a Methodist bookstore. 5th. Kerosene, sir. We do not know. Write to their address. 7th. It needs improvement.

A. B., (Amerville, O.,) writes: "As a reader of your paper I wish to ask a few questions, knowing that you have so often and readily advised others, I would thank you very much for your kind advice. 1st. Should a lady accept the company of a gent amen to or from a party if she is engaged and her betrothed is absent? 2d. There has been a young gentleman paying his respects to me for some time, and I thought he was sincere until he told me that he had been corresponding with a lady that he had become acquainted with, and said that he did it only to pass away time, and still wished my company. What shall I do? Shall I still receive his attentions or not? 3d. Should an engagement be broken on account of a dislike toward the gentleman by the lady's parents, if both are old enough to choose for themselves? 4th. If a lady or gentleman is engaged would it be proper to exchange photographs with another lady or gentleman? 5th. What style of rings are most worn as engagement-rings, and on what finger? 6th. Is there any place where hair that has come out by combing can be straightened and made into curls, or a switch? If so please state where and at what cost? 7th. Is there a book concerning the rules of etiquette? If so where and at what price can it be had? 8th. What do you think of my handwriting and orthography?" 1st. It depends greatly on who the gentleman is. If he is proper company for her, and her betrothed has confidence in her judgment and retitude, there would be no serious objection. 2d. Yes. Unless you have reason to doubt his word. Being bound to one as a lover is no reason why he should not write to another as a friend. 3d. If they have good reason for their dislike they would probably tell it. In that case you should be governed, not so much by the dislike, as by the cogency of the reason. The mere dislike of parents, however, is of course a very serious thing. 4th. It would be proper in special cases, but not as a general rule. 5th. See answer to A. P. Rings with stones are now being worn. A diamond is preferable, if within the means of the party. 6th. There are numerous places of the kind. If no extra hair is required, it will cost about $1 to 1½. There are many such books, at prices from $1.00 upward. 8th. Your handwriting is passable, your orthography correct.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

ANAGRAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

1. H. wont reveal.
2. About Negro.
3. Can-can for sis.
4. Silly cat Kate.
5. Seneca Dytch.
6. U pig seuk hope.
7. She meant R. C.
8. Or its rich cups.
9. Got no hat Ace.
10. Long stave.
11. One fry at W.
12. Lise Vansel.
13. Ben, I ask Tracy.
14. R. Rue, batter.
15. Dr. Fur's big creek.
16. Lu's Coffin Club.
17. A dosing E.
18. Trap on loge.
19. We go, get on it.
20. Ben McDaral.
21. Ollo, get red dye.
22. O, am I club.
23. A fatty eel.
24. Cork plot.
25. Dr. Drapi sang.
26. We lance R.
27. I be mortal.
28. Honest Carl.

Q. CUMBER.

CHARADE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My first is used as a means of defence,
'Gainst thieves of every kind;
My second, about the dinner hour,
Quite handy you will find.
On your gun you have my whole, no doubt,
For it would be of no use without.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

RIDDLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My 1st is in village, but not in town.
My 2d is in clergyman, but not in clown.
My 3d is in mountain, but not in vale.
My 4th is in tempest, but not in gale.
My 5th is in magnificent, but not in grand
My 6th is in water, but not in land.
My 6th is in silver, but not in gold.
And now before you my whole is told.

Seaboard, N. C. F. E. F.

ANAGRAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

NAMES OF ISLANDS.

1. Near a chasm.
2. Ira came.
3. No lad.
4. A staff.
5. Do learn.
6. Call no ire.
7. Can we aid Leon?
8. An Miler.
9. Six left.
10. Thomas Upton.
11. Go, pen torn.
12. Rain side.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

RIDDLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Seven letters comprise my name entire,
The name of a book which many admire.
The first three letters will bring to view
A Scripture character known to you.
The other four (if you rightly place)
Is something oft found on the human face.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

MISCELLANEOUS ENIGMA—Ill gotten gains are dearly bought, retribution soon will come.

ANAGRAMS—1, Buenos Ayres; 2, Montevideo; 3, La Guayra; 4, Caldera; 5, Pernambuco; 6, Philadelphia; 7, West Meriden; 8, New York; 9, Baltimore; 10, West Troy; 11, Monroe.

CHARADE—Shad-dock.

WORD SQUARES—

SPAR
PINE
ANNE
REED

CHARADES—1. Roderick Dhu. 2. History. 3 Mississippi. 4. Virginia.

PROBLEM—170 rods the diameter of the circumscribed circle—56 rods the diameter of the inscribed circle—90, 136 and 138 rods the sides of the triangle.

RECEIPTS.

MAKING SAUER-KRAUT.—The best we ever ate we made ourselves for many years, and for a considerable time with our own hands, and always from Savoy cabbage. It was manufactured in this wise: In the first place let your "stand," holding from a half barrel to a barrel, be thoroughly scalded out; the cutter, the tub and the stamper also well-scalded. Take off all the outer leaves of the cabbage, halve them, remove the heart and proceed with the cutting. Lay some clean leaves at the bottom of the stand, sprinkle with a handful of salt, fill in half a bushel of cut cabbage, stamp gently until the juice just makes its appearance, then add another handful of salt and so on until the stand is full. Cover over with cabbage leaves, place on top a clean board fitting the space pretty well, and on top of that a stone weighing twelve or fifteen pounds. Stand away in a cool place, and when hard freezing comes on, remove to the cellar. It will be ready for use in from four to six weeks. The cabbage should be cut tolerably coarse. The Savoy variety makes the best article, but it is only half as productive as the Drumhead and Flat Dutch.—*Ger. Telegraph.*

WATERPROOF BOOTS.—Take three ounces of spermaceti and melt it in a pipkin, or other earthen vessel, over a slow fire, add thereto six drachms of india-rubber, cut into slices, and these will presently dissolve. Then add, in the following order: tallow, eight ounces; hog's lard, two ounces; amber varnish, four ounces. Mix, and it will be fit for use immediately. The boots or other materials to be treated are to receive two or three coats with a common blacking-brush, and a fine polish is the result.

CURE FOR A FELON.—As soon as discovered, take some spirits of turpentine in a cup, dip the finger in it, and then hold the hand near a hot fire till dry; then dip it in again, and repeat for fifteen minutes, or till the pain ceases. The next day, with a sharp knife, pare off the thick skin, and you will find something like a honeycomb filled with clear water; opens the cells, and the felon is gone.

Another.—If the felon is too far advanced for turpentine, oil of origanum, treated in the same way, will cure. If too far advanced for either to cure, the felon will still be benefited, as it will be less painful. Never draw it. E. E. F.

TO REMOVE STAINS.—Alcohol will wash out stains of oil, wax, resin and pitchy substances; so will spirits of turpentine, and generally without injury to colors. The turpentine may afterward be removed with alcohol, as it is liable to leave a slight stain. Common burning fluid, which is a mixture of alcohol and turpentine (or camphene,) is an excellent solvent of oil, wax, tar, rosin, etc., and it soon dries off after use.